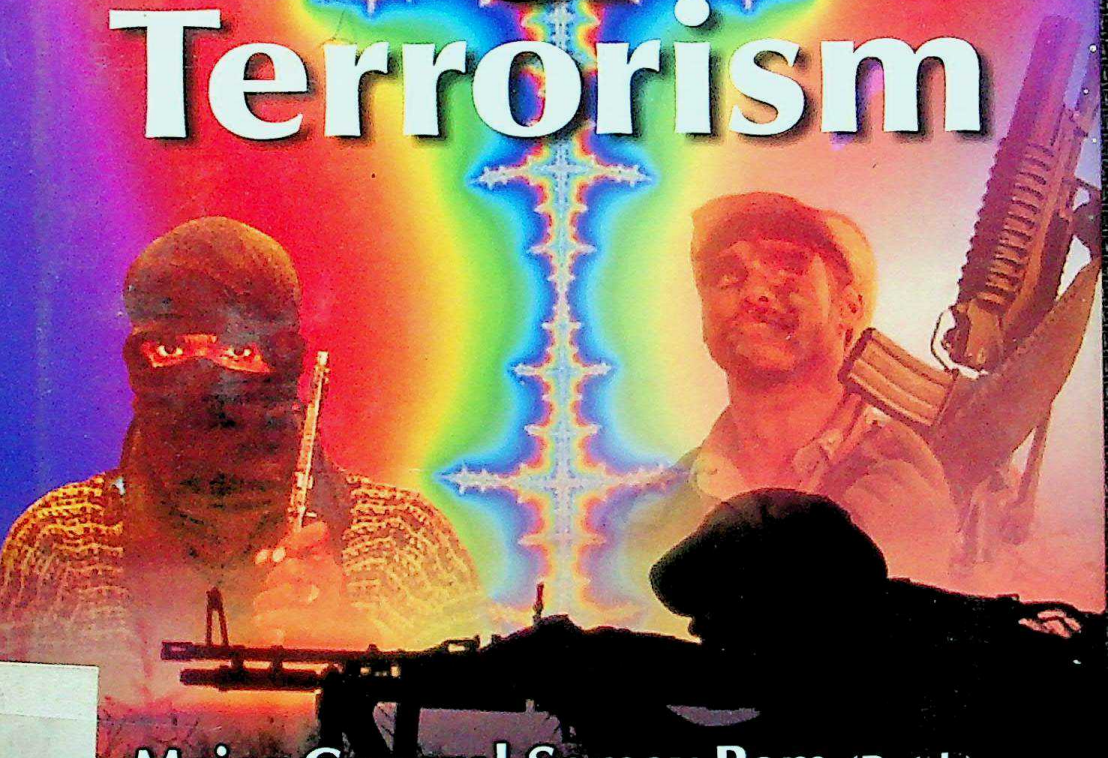
Gandhi Memorial College Of Education Bantalab Jammu

Tackling Insurgency & Terrorism



Major General Samay Ram (Retd.)
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This book deals with the current problems of insurgency and terrorism. It covers various nuances of these problems with emphasis on the challenges thrown up while conducting counter insurgency/counter terrorist operations with particular reference to Jammu & Kashmir.

The book is based on the personal experience of the author while witnessing or conducting counter insurgency operations in Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Punjab and J&K. It recommends the strategy to be adopted while tackling Insurgency and Terrorism.

It includes the war memoirs of the author while he was engaged in the intense phase of operations with the LTTE in Sri Lanka. This diary will be of great interest as it gives insight into a field commander's mind and reflects on planning at higher Headquarters. The book also highlights the constraints under which troops operate in an insurgency environment and recommends measures to overcome this problem.

While the book has its orientation and focus mainly on the military doctrine, it will be of equal value to the bureaucrate and the political leadership.

ISBN 81-7049-136-3

Rs. 595
$ 35.00
£ 20.00

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G.M. College of Education
Raipur, Bantalab
Jammu.
Acc. No. 6046 22(1)
Dated 16.3.11
370
RIUT

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UYSM, AVSM, VSM

Reference Book

Manas Publications
New Delhi-110 002 (INDIA)

CC-O. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation,Chandigarh

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MANAS PUBLICATIONS
(Publishers, Distributors, Importers & Exporters)
4819,Varun House, Mathur Lane,
24, Ansari Road, Darya Ganj,
New Delhi - 110 002 (INDIA)
Ph.: 3260783, 3265523, 7131660
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First Published 2002

ISBN 81-7049-136-3

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Typeset at
Manas Publications

Printed in India at
R.K. Offset, Delhi
and Published by Mrs. Suman Lata for
Manas Publications, 4819/XI, Varun House,
Mathur Lane, 24, Ansari Road, Daryaganj
New Delhi 110002 (INDIA)

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Dedication

"In memory of all the brave men,
living or dead, who served with me
in my days of anguish and joy"

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Preface

The world has been witnessing an alarming proliferation of conflict in the form of insurgency, often categorised as low intensity conflict (LIC). Such conflicts are becoming increasingly difficult to contain and near impossible to resolve, thus providing an altogether new dimension to military strategy which otherwise is focused on conventional warfare.

The Indian Army in particular has been exposed to the pressures of LIC from 1950 onwards, beginning with Nagaland and thereafter spreading to other parts of the country, Mizoram (1960), Manipur (1970), Punjab (1983-1993) and thereafter to Jammu & Kashmir (1990 onwards). Indian troops were also engaged overseas as part of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) in Sri Lanka(1987-1990) and later as part of the UN contingents in Somalia, Mozambique and so on.

Indian troops have executed very challenging tasks in this type of conflict and their performance has been commendable. They gained very valuable experience in fighting such type of warfare. Regretably, not much of this rich experience has been recorded, particularly by those who were actively involved in such operations. With few exceptions, most of the authors either indulged in the theory of such a complex warfare or their thrust has been on the nuances of such warfare, mostly at the tactical level.

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Fortunately, at the tactical level, the operational techniques are well-defined. The problems are compounded by the absence of clear cut military doctrines at the strategic level.

It is with a view to fill this void that I decided to recollect my thoughts and bring out a book based upon my personal experience that I had of either witnessing or participating in LIC in various assignments: as military attaché in Afghanistan (1982-1986), as brigade commander in IPKF (1987-1989) and as brigadier general staff (operations) at Headquarters Northern Command in J&K (February 1989-July1992).

This book highlights the major challenges that senior commanders face at the strategic level while operating in a LIC environment and subsequently deals with the approach to be adopted.

While the book is targeted at the senior officers of the army, the bureaucracy and our political leadership, it will equally well serve the need of officers at the junior level and help them to comprehend the larger picture while conducting operations at the tactical level.

While most of the material is based upon my personal experience and the notes I made during my service in the Army, nonetheless, I have made use of some of the publications and quoted the source. I hereby acknowledge with grateful thanks my gratitude to those publishers/ authors who have granted me permission to allow reproduction from their publications and equally to those who may find some reference to already published material and I have inadvertently failed to reach them.

I am grateful to some of my colleagues who have helped me in refining the contents of this book. I also thank the team for the tireless efforts in typing out the draft.

MAJ. GEN. SAMAY RAM

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Insurgency
Cause and Nature

Meaning of Insurgency

Insurgency is a very complex subject. People tend to confuse this with terms like terrorism, militancy and guerrilla warfare. I feel that there cannot be a better beginning for the book than to explain as to what these terms mean so that the reader understands clearly about the rest of the matter that follows and relates this to an insurgency environment.

Terrorism

The insurgent is generally referred to as a 'terrorist'. To some extent it may be true, but the similarity between a terrorist and an insurgent lies in the form of warfare adopted by them. Terrorism is conducted by individuals, small groups and is directed mainly against unarmed civilians. While insurgents even target the security forces, the target of guerrillas is always the security forces, their lines of communications and logistics bases and fire support units. It manifests itself in the form of murder, torture, mutilation, kidnapping, arson and hijacking. Terrorism is a weapon of the weak. Its aim is to erode the psychological support to the regime by spreading fear among officials, their domestic and international supporters

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so as to alter the location and attitudes of specific groups with a view to extract certain concessions like payment of ransom, release of prisoners, gaining publicity, demoralising the population through creation of widespread disorder, provoking repression by the government, enforcing cooperation and obedience from those inside/outside the movement. Terrorism unlike insurgency may be directed against own government or other countries.

For example, Osama Bin Laden, a terrorist leader and his group have directed all their activities against the USA. Similarly, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) has targeted Israel and its supporters. Insurgents too could use terrorism as a form of warfare.

Guerrillas

The term 'guerrilla' is basically used for armed/unarmed groups infiltrated behind enemy lines to attack/disrupt means of logistics and fire support to the troops fighting at the front. These small groups are lightly armed and employ mobile tactics to harass their opponent rather than defeat him in battle. Their primary targets are armed forces, police and key economic targets. The salient difference between a 'terrorist/insurgent' group and 'guerrillas' lies in the fact that guerrillas do not target unarmed civilians.

Insurgent (Militant)

The term refers to someone who revolts/rebels against the authority of the ruling government. Insurgents operate either in small groups or even large groups. They generally adopt 'terrorist' or 'guerrilla' type of tactics in the initial stages and graduate to conventional warfare mode when fully organised. The insurgent/militant gets identified with the terrorist or guerrilla mainly because he adopts their form of warfare. Unlike them, the targets of an insurgent are both civilians as well as security forces.

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Freedom Fighter

A lot of debate has been generated about the distinction between a Freedom Fighter and a Terrorist. While India calls the militants in J&K as terrorists, Pakistan has given them the status of Freedom Fighters. So what is the distinction? Simply described, a Freedom Fighter aims to overthrow a Foreign rule while any struggle against an elected government is insurgency or Terrorism. In that context, the militants/insurgents in J&K or the LTTE in Sri Lanka are Terrorists and not Freedom Fighters.

Insurgency

The term 'insurgency' therefore, denotes an armed rebellion by a section of the population against the legally constituted government with the sympathy/support of the local population, obtained through coercion or voluntarily. It covers the full spectrum of terrorism and guerrilla warfare graduating to conventional warfare aimed at overthrowing the ruling government.

To further clarify the issue, the salient differences are tabulated below:

	Terrorist	Guerrilla	Insurgent
Target	Could be the ruling government, but generally directed against hostile country. The target is unarmed civilians.	The security forces of the adversary and key economic targets.	Generally the ruling government target is both civilians as well as the security forces.
Aim	To erode the support to the ruling government or a hostile country.	Harass the opponent rather than defeat him.	To overthrow the ruling regime in own country. Foreign mercenaries could support the insurgents due to religious ideology.
Tactics	Murders, kidnapping hijacking, torture and so on.	Mobile tactics (raids, ambushes) to harass the security forces of the opponent.	Employs terrorist and guerrilla tactics in the initial stages.

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Causes of Insurgency

Like a doctor diagnoses the ailment before prescribing any medicine for its treatment, it is equally imperative to understand the symptoms and the cause of insurgency.

The causes of insurgency (militancy) could be political, ideological, economic and social disparity or even emotional in nature. In the book, "Insurgency in the Modern World" edited by Bard E'O Neill, William R Heater and Donald J Alberts these causes have been categorised as secessionist, revolutionary, reactionary, conservative, reformist and restorational. Therefore, with any of the aforesaid goals, the central problem for an insurgency is to make converts. The target is the people. The battle is to win over the hearts and minds of the populace. The militant's starting point is to prove themselves as a credible fighting force through successful operations and to publicise their ideological/political aims. By establishing their credibility as an effective force, the aim is to discredit the government and alienate it from the local mass of the population compelling it to adopt repressive measures so that it becomes impossible for the government to maintain ordinary life without harassment and repression, making life unbearable for the people leading to a chaotic situation in which the militants can quickly seize power.

Nature of Insurgency

Insurgency as is evident from the foregoing description is a very complex type of conflict. It poses several challenges, quite different from those of conventional warfare. To tackle this problem, it is imperative that there is a close understanding of these challenges, particularly at the strategic level. The first challenge in tackling insurgency is the understanding of the cause of the conflict. An analysis of the causes of insurgency in various parts of the world and within different states of India varies. No two situations

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are alike. For example, the cause of insurgency in Nagaland, is quite different from that in J&K or Punjab. In Nagaland, it was the economic neglect of the state and its people by the rest of the country that alienated the Nagas leading to the demand of a separate homeland for themselves; while in the state of Punjab, an economically prosperous state, the militancy was sponsored by foreign agencies to sever the state from India as a separate homeland for the Sikhs called 'Khalistan'.

The problem of identifying the cause for which they are fighting is equally faced by the security forces. In most of the situations, it is very difficult for the commander to explain to the soldiers as to why they were fighting the militants in a particular situation/state. For example, it took a lot of effort to convince the soldiers of the IPKF as to why they were fighting the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), an organisation believed to have had the full support of the Indian Government prior to the conflict. A similar challenge was faced by the US troops in Vietnam and the Soviet troops in Afghanistan.

Having identified the cause, negotiations should then be undertaken with the major factional groups to arrive at a mutually acceptable and negotiated settlement.

The genesis of any insurgency lies in the insurgent groups pursuing different goals and objectives aimed at ameliorating the conditions of its people. These goals could be political, economic or social in nature. Depending upon the goals, the local environment, the insurgents adopt any one or a combination of the following strategies, described in detail in the book *Insurgency in the Modern World.*

(a) Leninist Strategy

(b) Maoist Strategy

(c) Cuban Strategy

(d) Urban Strategy

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It is not intended to go into the details and discuss the above strategies. These are described briefly here. The reader is requested to read this book for better understanding of the subject. An analysis of various strategies adopted across the world, whether it was in Malaysia, Vietnam, Iraq (Kurdistan), Ethiopia, Ireland, Somalia, Cyprus and Afghanistan or within India (North East states of Nagaland, Mizoram, Assam and Tripura, Punjab and J&K) would suggest that no two situations were alike. The genesis of each situation was specific to its own type.

Leninist Strategy

This strategy is based on achieving the objectives of the movement through small, light disciplined and highly organised (conspirational) groups, elite cadres recruited on the basis of esoteric and exoteric, obtaining support from major appeals; discontented social groups like the military and working class. The purpose is normally revolutionary. Insurgent activity is confined to those urbanised countries which are major centres of political and economic power. It is based on the assumption that the government is weak, alienated from its population and will capitulate when confronted with low-level terrorism. It depends heavily on the subversion of the military and political hierarchy. Its culminating point is the seizure of radio/TV stations, government offices and other important institutions. It is mainly dependent on the political organisation and external support is secondary. The level of violence is limited.

Maoist Strategy

This strategy is based on the theory of Mao's peoples war in China. It lays a lot of significance on popular support of the local population. The insurgency passes through distinct stages and requires extensive efforts towards

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organisation and management of environment (political organisation-terrorism-guerrilla warfare-civil war). It assumes that the government is strong and in a superior position. Therefore, stress is on prolonged conflict with the government. The struggle starts with the control of rural areas and then expands to isolate urban centres. External support plays an important role. (The insurgency in the North Eastern States like Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura is based on this strategy).

Cuban Strategy

The exponents of this theory such as Fidel Castro and Che Guevara were the great masters of guerrilla warfare. It believes that popular forces can win a war against an army. It does not advocate fulfilment of all conditions to make a revolution, insurrection can create them. This is quite at variance with the Maoist Theory which advocates distinct stages/steps in insurgency before a full scale civil war. Like the Maoist strategy, this strategy is based on controlling the countryside (underdeveloped and rural areas). Military takes precedence over the political wing (party). This strategy like the Leninist Strategy is generally successful against a weak government.

Urban Strategy

Its author is Carlos Marighelle and it is based on popular support for its success. It relies on breaking/erosion of the enemy's will to resist through prolonged conflict, rather than on defeat of the enemy in classical military engagement. Contrary to the Maoist Theory, the focus of initial conflict is in the cities and not the countryside. This is based on the belief that the increased size and socio-economic differentiation of urban centres makes them more suited/vulnerable to sabotage/terrorism. It relies on turning a political crisis into an armed conflict by

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conducting violent actions that will compel the government to transform the political situation into a military situation. The repressive measures by the army and police will finally alienate the local population forcing them to revolt. The LTTE in Sri Lanka and to an extent the militants in J&K appear to be pursuing this strategy.

The insurgency manifests itself in the form of indiscriminate violence like bomb blasts, blowing up electric pylons and so on.

The militants aim at promoting a general feeling of nervousness, fear, disorientation and conditions of general insecurity which favour the militants in any society.

The target of all such activities is not the people, but the government. It is through a series of such activities that the militants convince the people about the inadequacy or the ineffectiveness of the civil administration. Besides, the militants also indulge in kidnappings and taking of hostages so as to bargain for the release of their compatriots in the custody of the government.

The militants also indulge in such activities with a view to focus the attention of the international community on their cause and keep the situation alive. The spurt in such violent activities is indicative of the reverses suffered by them and is aimed at sustaining or restoring the morale of its cadres.

The encounters with the security forces like ambushes, lobbing of grenades and use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) are aimed at demoralising and achieving moral ascendency over them so as to ultimately break their will to maintain the pressure.

To sum up, the aim of all activities of the militants is fourfold:

(a) Discredit the civil administration regarding its effectiveness and create an atmosphere of *chaos* and insecurity.

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(b) Alienate the local population from the government and the security forces so as to impose their will on the minds of the local people through the fear of the gun.

(c) Demoralise the security forces and break their will to maintain the pressure.

(d) Keep the situation alive and focus world attention to support their cause/goal.

Major General Arjun Ray author of the book *Kashmir Diary* has given a good description of the insurgency and counter insurgency operations. From the military point of view, insurgency places a psychological weight on the military mind. Counter insurgency operations whether winning or losing are an uphill and heartbreaking task. The battlefield appears to be frozen in time. While one is running all the time it appears that one is standing at the same place. The levels of uncertainty and friction at times become intolerable. A time comes when the mind is tempted to give up. A stalemate in the situation leads to a battle of wills; the will of the security forces to maintain the pressure and the will of the militants to sustain it. The operations are continuous, there are no tactical or logistics pauses and no time outs or half time. The frustration mounts when there is no breakthrough, but the expectations to perform and produce results are high. It is a warfare where execution is decentralised. The impact and influence of higher commanders is less as their orders and intent take time to reach the subordinate commanders, particularly at the execution level. The soldiers are caught in a cross fire-moral *vis-a-vis* immoral and the dividing lines are blurred. In sum, counter insurgency operations impose severe strain on those who are engaged in these types of operations with consequent adverse effects on their motivational level and leadership.

A pragmatic view of militancy would suggest that it is

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not merely a law and order situation, while the law and order is only a result of the deeper malaise.

Other dimensions of insurgency that must be understood are:

(a) There are no rear boundaries in a low intensity conflict. It transcends all political and geographical boundaries. The conflict would, therefore, in all probability be extended to depth areas thus making the surface communications vulnerable to disruption. The militants could also extend their area of operations well into the interior.

(b) The conflict is between the visible and the invisible. While the soldiers can be easily identified by their uniforms, the militants cannot be easily spotted because they operate in civil clothes and live generally with the local population.

(c) Time seems to favour the militants. The longer the struggle, the more it goes in favour of the militants because:

(i) The militants get blooded. They start having a better comprehension of the tactics, *modus operandi* and the vulnerabilities of the security forces.

(ii) The people get more and more alienated because of the harassment suffered due to the ongoing operations of the security forces. Casualties to the militants too become a cause of alienation as any militant killed/ wounded or apprehended is related to somebody or the other.

(iii) The international community too starts sympathising with the militants and supporting their goals/cause.

(d) No time frame can be fixed for resolving such complex issues. Any political/military leader who professes that he has got across the hump and sets a date for wiping out militancy is not only indulging

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in self-deception, but also sending wrong signals to those in authority for taking certain vital decisions and formulating a policy on the subject.

(e) The violent movements perpetuated by the insurgents cannot sustain themselves without public support and soon the local populace is roped into the fight resulting in heavy casualities to the civilians posing serious problems of human rights violations.

(f) While conventional wars have some rules, unconventional wars like insurgency have no rules of the game.

(g) The military can no longer fight a private and proper little war. With the current technology and sound communication systems, media coverage is almost simultaneous with the movement of troops making its management a major issue for the leadership, both military and political.

The right perception and comprehension of the nature of insurgency as enumerated above is vital to all those who are charged with the responsibility of formulating the correct policy and adopting the right approach. It will be apparent from the above description that while no deadlines/dates can be set for the containment/resolution of the problem, insurgency cannot be allowed to linger on. Such an attitude helps militancy and prolongs the misery of the local people as well as the security forces who are charged with the responsibility of combating it.

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Notes

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2

Causes of Insurgency
The Indian Scene

India attributes the insurgency to be the handiwork of its neighbouring countries. Earlier, it was China and erstwhile East Pakistan that appeared to be sponsoring terrorism in the North East region (Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram and Tripura). Presently, it seems to be Pakistan and the (ISI) Inter Services Intelligence that is engaged in a systematic strategy of infusing Islamic fundamentalist ideology into Kashmir.

But, this argument seems exaggerated. While the role of China in the early 60s to foment trouble in the North East region and now Pakistan's indulgence in a proxy war in Jammu & Kashmir is incontrovertible, the grievances of the insurgents against the Indian state are not entirely of China's or of Pakistan's making. China and Pakistan have simply exploited the existing discontent within the segments of the people of these regions. India cannot be absolved of its role over the years in precipitating the crises in these states. A look into the possible causes of conflict in various states/ regions of India would substantiate this argument.

Punjab

The partition of Punjab into Punjab and Haryana did not

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fully meet the demands of the Akalis and this led to the Punjabi Suba Agitation in 1966. Political rivalry of some national parties created the bogey of Bhinderanwale to counter the growing influence of the Akalis. Over the years, Bhinderanwale himself became one of the active proponents of the "Khalistan Movement".

The growing population resulted in reduced land holdings in that the progeny of marginal farmers became owners of economically unviable land holdings with consequent unemployment reaching a new peak in the early 1980s. This disgruntled youth provided ready cadres to the militant organisations.

Lower investment by the Centre in the state was perceived as arbitrary and discriminatory. This gave rise to the Anandpur Sahib resolution of 1978. The resolution demanded rectification of the imbalance in power sharing between the Centre and the states.

External support from the prosperous Sikh community abroad in the form of financing the militant groups gave the necessary fillip to the struggle.

Lastly, it was the promise of assistance in the form of equipping and training the militants by Pakistan that sustained the struggle.

Jammu and Kashmir

Historically, the state of J & K was ruled by the Hindus/ Sikhs for a long period of time. The majority of Kashmir Muslims, especially the Valley developed a feeling of being subjugated and discriminated against. Even the partition of 1947 failed to fulfil their aspiration of either being an independent state or merger with Pakistan. Thereafter, it was the non compliance of the UN resolution by both, Pakistan and India that further alienated the Muslims.

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Lack of faith in the political system which was accentuated by the 'unholy' alliance between the National Congress (NC) and the Congress. The matter was further precipitated by the alleged large scale rigging of the 1987 elections of the state assembly.

Increased literacy, economic development and exposure to worldwide media resulted in political mobilization in the form of political awakening that is reflected in the citizen's desire for political participation.

This also manifested itself in heightened aspirations, which coupled with unemployment amongst the educated youth led to frustration and anger towards the government.

Emergence of sub-nationalism and its challenge to India. Breakdown of 'Kashmiriyat' (distinctive looks, common language, assimilation of various faiths/cultures and a particular ethnic profile of both the Muslims and Hindus). Pakistan drew a wedge between the Hindus and the Muslims through teachings in *madrasas*. This coupled with the growth in global Muslim fundamentalism led to religious fundamentalism.

Rampant corruption amongst the bureaucracy and the politicians resulting in the denial of benefits to the common man despite liberal economic assistance from the Centre.

Inept handling of the law and order situation by the state government.

Finally, support from Pakistan in the form not only of equipping and training the militants, but also providing them with moral, political and financial support. The situation in Kashmir is viewed as an ideal opportunity by Pakistan as her last chance to wrest the Valley from India.

Assam

Economic backwardness of the state is perceived as the result of neglect of the region by the Centre.

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Influx of outsiders in the state especially the large number of refugees from Bangladesh have threatened the ethnic Assamese. The failure of the Centre to address this problem has led to the demand for a separate state outside India.

Inadequate compensation for the natural resources of Assam (oil, tea and wood) being taken out of the state.

The economic backwardness coupled with rapid growth of population has further aggravated the problem over the past several decades; Assam has recorded a growth rate of 35 percent to 37 percent as against 20 percent to 25 percent all India average in each of the decades during the period 1951–1981. The growth rate is mainly attributed to the influx of outsiders into the state. The ethnic Assamese constitute only 45 percent of the total population, the remainder are Biharis (10 percent), Bengalis (10 percent) and migrants (Marwaris, Bangladeshis and Muslims, Nepalese) which account for 35 percent. The issue of imbalance in the pattern of population got highlighted in March 1979, in the Mangaldoi (Darrang Distt) during elections when out of 6,00,000 voters, 45,000 were identified as foreigners. The Assamese have thus been reduced to a minority leading to insecurity.

The imbalance in the population alongwith the drainage of its natural resources has caused serious resentment amongst the ethnic Assamese. For various reasons, especially the lack of requisite infrastraucture, the state continues to be backward as regards industries. Assam accounts for only 2 percent of the total factories registered in India as against West Bengal's share of 22 percent. Even in the production of food, the state is dependent on daily imports worth Rs 2 crores as the state produces only 2.9 percent of all India food grains despite large tracts of alluvial lands.

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North East Region (Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura)

The case of these states is no different. Due to the mountainous terrain covered with thick jungles, this region is inaccessible. No efforts were made by the Centre even after independence to develop rail and road communications to connect them to the mainland. The people of this region therefore were isolated and neglected. Prolonged neglect & isolation led to a sense of alienation, a fertile situation for the onset of insurgency.

The Real Issues and Challenges

A look into the reasons for the onset of insurgency in various states/regions of the country appear to be due to political manipulations against the wishes of the local population, prolonged neglect and economic discrimination over the years having led to a sense of deprivation and alienation. With access to TV and other media and improved literacy rates, the people have revolted against such political manipulations and economic neglect. They have become better informed and their aspirations have become apparent.

This is the real issue before the government and the first major challenge is to recognise the cause of alienation in a particular state and then address the issues with a view to find lasting solutions to them.

Regrettably, the political and the governemnt machinery have taken a 'tunnel view', instead of addressing the problems in a holistic manner. The problem has been viewed merely as a law and order situation. Calling in the armed forces appears to provide a sense of accomplishment and reason enough. Therefore, the procedure has been to soft-pedal on the most vital non-military aspects of the problems. Such an obvious stance becomes the breeding ground for rebellion, hardening of attitudes setting in the cycle of snowballing violence. It is probably high time that the

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government looked pragmatically at the problems, devised answers as a matter of national undertaking and a matter that does not end by throwing into the arena the instrument of last resort—the armed forces. Using the baton too hard and for too long and prolonging the problems only leads to the real issues becoming non-issues. Significantly, as time passes, the locals become accustomed to the violence of the insurgents and the counter violence by the security forces. Gradually, the locals become sympathetic to the cause of the insurgents and the ultimate weapon—the armed forces—lose respect. Viewed in this context, the government appears to be taking steps in the right direction by declaration of a unilateral ceasefire and extending it to J&K. But time is short and the centre/state governments have to move faster. It has to be a multi-dimensional integrated approach of negotiating with the militants, rejuvenating the local police, take drastic measures to improve the functioning of the state government. The government should not only act, but also be visible in its improved *avtar*. Pakistan will either see the reality and become a party to resolving the long outstanding issues or find itself relegated to the role of a nonentity.

Since, India has to live with the problem of insurgency for some time to come, the governemnt needs to form an apex body at the Centre. It should include representatives (not below the rank of additional secretaries) from the Ministries of Defence, Home, Finance, External Affairs, I & B Ministry (to handle psychological operations and media management, Vice Chief of the Army Staff, Central Police Organisations (CPO)/ Border Security Force (BSF) and Research & Analysis Wing (RAW) and Intelligence Bureau (IB) advisers). It should be given full powers and empowered with legal and constitutional authority for taking political decisions. It could be an autonomous body directly under the Prime Minister and have a full time secretariat. A similar arrangement, albiet on a smaller scale, should be constituted for each of the affected states.

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3

Insurgency and Civil Administration

The maintenance of law and order in the state is the responsibility of the states. The instruments of ensuring good law and order rests with the civil administration, comprising the political leadership assisted by the bureaucracy, the police/CPO and the judiciary.

The issue that exercises the minds of all right thinking people is why the civil administration and police/CPO fail to maintain law and order in the state and the problem is allowed to graduate into a full scale insurgency necessitating the employment of the armed forces.

While the political leadership in a state facing insurgency shares the major blame for not ruling the state efficiently or itself indulging in fomenting trouble, the reasons that could be attributed to the failure of the bureaucracy and civil police/CPO and the judiciary are as follows.

Failure of Civil Administration (Bureaucracy)

The administration fails to reach the rural areas, particulary those areas which are difficult to access. In the initial stages the insurgents survive with their bases in such areas. The villagers perforce are compelled to buy peace with

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insurgents.

The insurgents have their sympathisers in all the departments. These sympathisers act as the ears and eyes of the insurgents. They also play a vital role in neutralising/ winning over others.

Rampant corruption in the ranks of the administration acts as a major contributory factor and serves as propaganda material for the insurgents to incite the locals against the civil administration.

The local media plays a major role in espousing the cause of the militants. In the absence of proper media management and lack of machinery to carry out psychological operations, the insurgents coerce the local media to carry their stories. The civil administration fails to check such biased reporting.

The insurgents threaten the civil officials and their families against taking any action against them. Failure to provide security to civil officials and their families forces them to obey the dictates of the insurgents.

Failure of Police/CPO Forces

The state police is the main instrument for maintaining law and order, but it fails to handle insurgents because:

The police is neither adequately armed and equipped, nor trained to handle cases other than normal civil cases. Since the insurgents are armed, the police is unable to apprehend them.

Rampant corruption in the police allows the insurgents to get away by luring them with some monetary gains.

Most of the police personnel are deployed on personal security duties of VIPs leaving hardly any manpower for dealing with the insurgents.

Intimidation and threat to life/reprisals by the insurgents discourages them to face them/check their activities.

The lack of proper discipline and consequent low morale in the police force gives a qualitative edge to the insurgents.

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The police communication set up is generally static. It does not match the mobile communications and consequently the flexibility/mobility of the insurgents.

The sympathisers of the insurgents within the police act as informers thus compromising the operations before they are launched.

The police is generally shy of operating at night thus allowing the insurgents to move totally unchallenged.

Ineffective Judiciary

The state judiciary is generally ineffective as far as the trials of the insurgents are concerned because:

The existing criminal/evidence laws are not in tune with the requirements of handling cases of insurgents/terrorists. Secondly, some of the magistrates are susceptible to corruption. All this results in police/CPO forces being compelled to retain the insurgents in their custody without trials, temptation on the part of the police to liquidate captured insurgents in fake encounters, and adverse human rights commissions and media demoralising the police/media.

The refusal of the magistrates to carry out trials because of fear of reprisals.

Bribery of jail officials to free prisoners in custody.

Insufficient and inadequate intelligence support for evidence.

How do we strengthen these organisations/institutions so that the administaration in the state is effective enough, to deal with situations of breakdown in law and order thus obviating the requisition of the armed forces? To do so, the forces must be at the district and tehsil levels.

Firstly, some key officials like the Deputy Commissioner, and the Superintendent of Police must be young (Indian Administrative Service) IAS and (Indian Police Service) IPS officers whose service records indicate a high degree of initiative, leadership and proven personal courage; officers who can take risks in life and expose themselves to danger;

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so also other officers like the (District Forest Officer) DFO, District Development Officer, Executive Engineer Public Works Department (PWD), Irrigation, PHED, Electricity Board, Civil Surgeon, District Food and Supplies Officer and Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM). In addition, there has to be a strengthening of the agriculture, education, veterinary and cooperative departments as they have a direct role in the development activities. The thrust has to be two-pronged—to make the administration both responsive and effective on the one hand and take up projects which would redress imbalances and inequalities on the other. The district officials must be given a fairly free hand with adequate resources by the State. Simultaneously, the political parties must activate their cadres to counter the militants on a political level because this is not the job of the bureaucracy. And most importantly, sensitive areas should not be made a battle ground in the political war.

As far as the police is concerned, the following measures would help rejuvenate the force.

The Director General of Police (DGP) must be selected after due care based on his professional competence and leadership qualities.

He should enjoy a full tenure and be given a free hand in transfers/postings without political interference.

The police force should be re-structured, equipped/ armed and trained to make it competent in handling even insurgents. They should have reliable communication system and better mobility for speedy reaction. The armed constabulary being employed in civil role must be desisted.

The motivational level of the police has to be built to a high level through various monetary incentives, awards and out of turn promotion schemes. The force must act as a deterrence to the insurgents and the police must accept the task of dealing with the militancy as a matter of pride and challenge. In this context, the nation has the live example of

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the Punjab Police being converted into an effective fighting machine by the then DGP, KPS Gill. The Punjab Police took the brunt of the militancy and the army was used only in a supportive role.

The CPO comprising Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) and BSF must also be equipped and trained to make them an effective force. The use of these forces in penny packets must stop. While our response has been an increase in the numbers of the police force, they have not been improved qualitatively whereby they can handle situations in aid of civil power independently. Except in extraordinary circumstances, the use of the army becomes necessary.

Lastly, the nation has still tremendous faith in our judiciary. The state cannot allow the judges/magistrates to be intimidated or corrupted by the militants. Our laws would also need to be amended to provide certain legal protection to the armed forces, allow them to detain an apprehended person for over 24 hours so that the armed forces could extract actionable information and carry out search operations without the presence of police personnel or a magistrate as they not only compromise plans, but act as additional impediments in executing the task expeditiously.

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Notes

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4

Militants

Characteristics and Psychology

Appendix 'A'—Details of major militant groups operating in J&K, Assam & North East (NE) region.

General

Insurgency survives on the strength of its militant wing. The armed militants, therefore, become the main contender and target of the security forces. They pose the most formidable challenge to the security forces in restoring normalcy.

Unfortunately, many field commanders do not study in detail the characteristics of the militant groups which they are fighting and continue to treat them alike not realising that each militant group has its peculiar ideology and characteristics. For example, the Afghan mujahideens were experts in mine warfare, innovations and mountain warfare. The LTTE is known for the cyanide capsule carried by each individual around his neck; and they specialised in use of Improvised Explosive Devises (IEDs) as well as human bombs. Amongst the J&k militants, Jaish-e-Mohammed group is known for use of human bombs. Notwithstanding the peculiar characteristics of each group, they have some

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common features in their organisation and *modus operandi* and psychology.

Since I had the opportunity of knowing or fighting most of these groups during various assignments in the army, aspects which merit attention of those fighting them or engaged in dialogue with them for negotiations are highlighted.

Details of major groups operating presently in J&K, Assam and other states of North East region are given at Appendix 'A'

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS AND MODUS OPERANDI OF MILITANTS

Organisation and Equipment

Salient features commonly visible in various organisations are as follows:

(a) The organisations of militant groups vary from place to place and may range from very well-knit and motivated to loosely-knit organisations, lacking direction and motivation. Some of the more formalised militant outfits are organised into units/sub units based on population centres and lines of communication. Most of the organisations are reluctant to move far away from their local habitat and even when they are temporarily dislocated due to operations by the security forces, they tend to return to their operating base and continue to operate in a stealthier and more surreptitious manner.

(b) Often, there are more than one group supporting the same cause, with varying ideology and approach. Intra/inter group rivalries and internecine wars are common characteristics. There may be a nexus between the militant groups operating in different parts of the country with totally different aims and objectives.

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(c) Recruitment may be voluntary through religious/ ideological motivation, it may be coerced or it may be for lure of easy life. The volunteers provide the hard core and are most motivated, often preferring to die than to surrender. Rural based cadre is usually physically more tough and hardy vis a vis the urbanised cadre.

(d) Foreign abetted groups are likely to get support by way of safe sanctuaries/camps, training facilities, supply/smuggling of arms and ammunition, grant of political asylum. Moral and psychological support and financial aid.

(e) Apart from financial and material aid from the adversary state, militants are also likely to get financial assistance from like-minded people/groups/institutions abroad. For routine administrative support, they depend upon the locals. Indigenous sources for raising funds include tax collection, bank robberies, ransom, drug trafficking and extortions.

(f) The militants have access to sophisticated state of the art weaponry, though the quantity would usually be at a premium. The adversary state often provides the conduit for import/supply of weapons. Some of the militant organisations are known to possess sophisticated weapons like AK 47/56 rifles, UMGs, GPMGs, sniper rifles, RLs, LMGs, grenades and so on. Locally improvised arsenal, viz, Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), grenades, booby traps, mines are also extensively employed.

(g) State of training varies and is usually not consistent; the training period ranging from two weeks to two months. Emphasis during training is on firing skills, use of improvised explosives and only limited emphasis is laid on tactics and battle craft. Those not forming the 'hard core' mainly rely on 'on the job' training.

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Tactics

Militants establish their sanctuaries, training camps and launch pads either across the international border in countries providing them support or in remote, inaccessible and unsuspecting areas where they enjoy the support of the local populace. Thick forests and hill tops are used for the purpose, however, in thickly populated plains, hide-outs and caches are established inside villages/population centres. They are also known to use religious places for self-preservation, for planning, coordination and control as also for establishing weapon caches. Certain sympathisers may also temporarily harbour militants in transit or to execute a strike; some people may even be induced to provide such a facility by coercion. Certain affluent militant leaders may even disguise themselves and stay in posh urban areas. Ingenious methods are employed to hide the weapons, ammunition and equipment in most unsuspected places such as forests, haystacks, bamboo groves, banana trees, tree tops, abandoned/dilapidated houses, water tanks/ponds/wells, false ceilings, niches under staircases, cattle sheds, underground cellars, thatched roofs, hollow bottom of vehicles/storage facilities and so on.

While operating from the territory of a neighbouring country, they attempt to infiltrate in small groups of 5 to 15 persons through difficult areas and gaps in deployment, making use of hours of poor visibility; some locals may be employed/coerced into providing necessary guidance. An adversary state, providing overt support to the militants, may even create border incidents and carry out extensive firing to cover the infiltration by militants. Unsuspected transport may be used to move from/to the border/Line of Control (LoC).

Militants often succeed in infiltrating into various government agencies including the intelligence and police to intimidate and subvert them and to gather intelligence.

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They also establish popular bases amidst population centres to gain intelligence; the degree of intelligene inputs from the locals depends upon the extent of support enjoyed by them. Other means like radio intercepts are also used for intelligence gathering. Ease of acquiring intelligence and its rapid dissemination through the locals is an important asset of the militants.

The security of militants lies in their continuous move from one place to another; operations by small groups and being invisible particularly by night. Militants quickly merge with the population and are not easily discernible as they employ various means of transportation including commercial airlines, cycles, motor cycles, cars, buses, trains and so on.

Some militant groups shoot up to prominence by creating a 'Robinhood' image based on socio-ecnonomic programmes for the poor and having won popular support, perpetuate a reign of terror and bring about a fear psychosis to elicit obedience.

The militants usually select soft and eminent value targets against whom they execute a surgical strike. Terrorists may even strike indiscriminately at the innocent. The aim is to discredit the government, law and order agencies, project them to be ineffective and provoke a ham-handed repression. Unless the state of insurgency is in an advanced stage, they are not likely to engage themselves in a pitched battle against the Security Forces (SF); the chances of striking at the SFs are also remote, though sporadic strikes on vulnerable and isolated targets like police pickets cannot be ruled out. During advanced stages of insurgency, however, they may even strike at and have pitched encounters with SFs, particularly in built up areas.

Militants often make use of built up areas as strong points to bring down heavy volume of fire and to get away, moving from house to house. However, they generally avoid sleeping

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inside the villages/built up areas and camp at a convenient and safe distance away from the village in order to evade a possible cordon.

The nature of operation and targets of the militants are:

(a) Sniping at VIPs/key persons, particularly those who vehemently oppose their ideology and those who may be involved in directing/executing operations against them. Such sniping may be carried out from protected/concealed places or even from amidst crowded gatherings.

(b) Disruption of communications and denial of use of roads by blowing up bridges, railway tracks, aircraft and so on by using remotely controlled explosive devices.

(c) Elimination of informers, relatives of police and government officials and those assisting the SFs.

(d) Kidnapping and hijacking of affluent and prominent people for ransom, to secure release of apprehended militants or to secure their demands as well as to attract media attention.

(e) Sabotage of government installations to include important offices, treasures, TV/radio station, essential services etc.

(f) Ambush important convoys and VIP columns; apart from inflicting casualties the aim is also to capture weapons and ammunition.

(g) The militants pursuing terrorist ideology often resort to indiscriminate killing and maiming innocents in buses, trains and public places, the aim being to spread terror.

(h) Terrorising segments of society into submission by carrying out political murders.

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(i) Dominate the area by frequent visits and by undertaking selective operations all over.

(j) Militants resort to imposing numerous behaviour codes, eg, wearing of typical clothes, ban on consumption of liquor and so on to establish their supremacy. They also dictate other terms like following a specified cropping pattern, restriction on use of lights at night and such like, to facilitate their operations.

The reactions of militants when encircled include:

(a) Fighting to the last man—last round by the hard core.

(b) Splitting up and breaking out of the cordon in different directions.

(c) Individually hiding in selected places.

(d) Mixing with the local population after ditching their weapons.

(e) Running out of the cordon, forcing other locals to also flee along, thus restricting SF fire.

(f) Other militants from outside to interfere with the SF cordon to divert attention.

(g) Women gherao SFs and create situation to distract them.

Some hard core terrorists also resort to committing suicide by consuming cyanide. This poses problems of apprehending them alive for interrogation.

Militants have been known to employ women as couriers to carry arms, ammunition, food, medicines and messages. In some cases, separate organisational wings have been created for the women.

Militants also make extensive use of propaganda and psychological operations through sponsored newspapers, posters, leaflets and through statements of captured/kidnapped

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persons as also through foreign media particularly when an adversary state is providing the support. Allegations of atrocities and molestation are often made in an attempt to malign the SFs and also to impose caution on them in carrying out operations. They also make efforts to incite the SFs into events where the general public is inconvenienced or endangered.

Peculiar Characteristics

Each militant group has distinct and unique features and commanders in the field must apprise themselves of these distinct features so that own operations are modified/planned accordingly. For example, it took some time before one understood that LTTE had an expertise in IEDs. The lesson was learnt rather late and at a heavy price. Similarly in J&K, where Lashkar-e-Tayyeba is operating, our camps and headquarters had ensured security from the likelihood of fidayeen (suicide attacks).

Ideology

Each group has its own ideology. For example, while JKLF is pro-independence, the other pan-Islamic groups are fighting for secession of Kashmir. The understanding of the ideology comes handy when efforts are made to negotiate. One militant group could be used against the other, as was done in 'Op Pawan' where the Indian Army fully utilised the services of the other militant groups against the LTTE.

Level of Motivation and Training

This is an important aspect which the field commanders generally underrate or overlook. Had we known the level of training and motivation of the LTTE, then commanders would not have boasted of the operations being over in 72 hours.

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Secondly, the level of motivation helps in extracting useful and actionable intelligence from the captured militants. In this context, full credit must be given to the LTTE. Their motivational level was so high that they would commit suicide rather than get captured because they were made to believe that no human being can withstand physical torture for long and would ultimately break down.They would try to swallow a cyanide capsule when likely to be captured and commit suicide. And if they were not sucessful in committing suicide, then they could withstand all the physical torture, but would not break down for minimum 72 hours, the time the LTTE thought would be enough to take counter measures against the army operations which would follow what the captured militant revealed.

Communication Network and Use of Codes

All militant groups have an extensive network of radio communications and use of their own codes. This must gradually be deciphered to obtain vital information by listening into their conversations.

PSYCHOLOGY OF MILITANTS

Mentality of a Murderer

When a militant joins a particular group, he is assigned a mission of killing somebody (an informer or a suspect). The first killing of a human being is extremely difficult. But once a murder is done the militant no longer hesitates to kill any number of others. He thereafter becomes remorseless.

Kith and Kin Don't Matter

After a militant leaves his home, he becomes totally detached from his relatives. Therefore, in most cases a hardened militant may not respond to the arrest of his parents/wife/children.

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Intolerant

The militants consider the locals like the pond in which they survive. They, therefore, expect the locals to help them with food, shelter, finances and obtaining intelligence. On the contrary, if a local is found to be an informer of the police or the security forces, then they mete out an exemplary punishment to him and his family as a deterrent for others.

Commitment to the Cause

This will depend upon whether a militant is a volunteer, or has been coerced to join the struggle. It is seen that those who are volunteers are the hard core whose commitment to the cause for which they are fighting is unquestionable while the other category can be weaned away. This intense commitment of 'Black Belt' Tigers was evident; they would settle for no less than Tamil Eelam, a reality which India failed to realise while signing the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord, 1987.

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5

Military Doctrine

Based upon past experience of over four decades, the army has evolved its drills and procedures at the tactical level. Operations like laying of ambushes, cordon and search, raids and route picketting have almost been perfected to the extent that even generals have got accustomed to conducting operations confined to such levels, amounting to interference at the junior level.

Strategic issues like the role of the army, military aim, strategy, concept of operations, intelligence, conduct of psychological operations and media management and so on, do not receive the desired attention. The attention of the reader should, therefore, be focused on these vital issues.

Role of the Security Forces

There is a growing feeling even in the minds of some political leaders that the army is being called out too often to deal with internal problems. They argue that the primary role of the army is to fight an external aggression which is likely to be fought as a conventional war. Thus, there has been a demand to raise a separate force to deal with the internal situation created by terrorism or insurgency and the army should be left free to concentrate on its primary role. Such

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an attitude will imply that the army will respond to an external aggression only and be a silent spectator to an adverse situation arising out of internal threat. Obviously such a situation is unacceptable.

Besides, it is also a fact that the army fought the last war with Pakistan almost three decades ago. During this period, the internal situation in the country has deteriorated. While there was no let up in the insurgency in the North East, there were problems to be contended within the most sensitive border states of Punjab and recently in J&K. Could the situation be retrieved in the state of Punjab and contained in the state of J&K without the involvement of the army? The answer is obviously, no.

Therefore, it is not only an imperative, but also a compulsion that the army would continue to play a dominant role in resolving/containing insurgency. However, the only alternative is to minimise its commitments. This could only happen if the local police in the affected state is revitalised so as to be able to successfully combat the situation on its own with some help from the BSF/other para-military forces/ central police organisations. The nation has the example of the state of Punjab to emulate. Some political leaders may now want to settle scores with successful police officers like KPS Gill; the reality is that it is on account of his leadership alone that the Punjab police was motivated to play its decisive role. The army was providing only a backup to the Punjab Police.

The firm conclusion with regard to the employment of the army to deal with internal disturbances, therefore, is that no matter whether separate forces for dealing with the internal situation are raised or not, the army will continue to be the cutting edge in counter insurgency operations and thus must always be prepared to undertake such tasks while being fully prepared for its primary role.

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The other issue that is generally debated is with regard to the role the army should play in the performance of its task in dealing with the insurgency. While it is generally accepted that the BSF/other para-military forces (Central Police Organisations) are in the supportive role of the army, the controversy is generally between the army and the civil administration. It is a well known fact that any negotiated settlement with the militants is the prerogative of the government. The government, therefore, expects the army to create conditions favourable for such negotiations so that the negotiations can be conducted from a position of strength. But on the other hand, since insurgency is a politico-military problem, the army expects the civil administration to play its role in assuaging the problems of the people. This debate is like whether the hen came first or the egg. To resolve this issue, it needs to be understood that while the army has the responsibility to eliminate the shadow of fear of the militants (gun), the civil administration must also function in the prevailing tense environment even if it means working under the security umbrella so that its credibility is not questioned.

Military Aim

When I was inducted as part of the IPKF in Sri Lanka, there was so much confusion with regard to the military aim. I was tasked to advance to Jaffna along a certain axis/axes and clear certain townships/suburbs en route to the city of Jaffna. It was like an "advance to contact". There were no specific orders with regard to the killing/apprehending of militants. Had such orders/instructions been specifically laid down, the approach would have been entirely different. It is not sure if any such military aim had been laid down at the highest level. Later on as the operations developed and we got into the typical counter-insurgency situation, the numbers game became clear.

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It was once again that a similar situation arose when I was posted as the Brigadier General Staff (BGS) Operations (OPS) at Headquarters Northern Command. Consequent to the onset of insurgency in the Kashmir Valley, there was a high level meeting of the army commander and the corps commanders with other very senior staff officers in attendance to deliberate and formulate the army's response to the developing situation. It is at this meeting that I requested for stipulation of the military aim and the military strategy. It was no surprise to me that there were different perceptions and, therefore, divergent opinions with regard to the military aim of the operations. Some of the suggestions which came up are as under:

(a) To assist the civil administration in restoring normalcy.
(b) To kill/apprehend maximum number of militants and recover maximum weapons/warlike stores.
(c) To degrade the militancy.
(d) To eliminate the insurgency.

Let us now examine the ramifications of each of the above and draw some conclusions with regard to a possible military aim that should generally be stated at the strategic level.

(a) *To Assist the Civil Administration in Restoring Normalcy in the Insurgency Affected Area*

This is an expression generally used by the civil administration when military assistance is requisitioned to control a specific situation which has temporarily gone beyond the control of the local police/central police organisation working under the direct control of the civil administration. Recently, it was the riots in Bombay wherein army assistance was sought to restore normalcy in the law and order situation. In such a situation, the army is handed over the situation for that specific task. The army decides on the force level

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required and acts on the principle of using minimum force. The army is not vested with the powers to search or apprehend suspected culprits as per the Special Forces Act 1958. The army also does not get involved till its assistance is requisitioned in writing and invariably a first class magistrate is availabe during such riots. The expenditure incurred on the movement and employment of the force level is reimbursed by the state government.

(b) *To Kill/Apprehend Maximum Number of Militants and Recover Maximum Weapons/Equipment/Warlike Stores*

Historically, the formations and units have always aimed at killing/apprehending maximum militants and recovering maximum arms/equipment/other warlike stores. Infact, that has been the yardstick for assessing the performance of any formation/unit and even individual officers. The unit citations or individual awards are based on this aspect. But if analysed critically, will such an aim not be limited in its scope? Would it not mean that achievements in this field will be overriding other aspects which are equally important? For example, can the security forces alienate the local population in the process of fulfilling this aim ? If that happens, then the security forces would be doing exactly what the militants wish for. Secondly, can the security forces ignore the laws on human rights violations and resort to the torture of apprehendees/suspects to extract information? Obviously not, because such actions will draw adverse media publicity and pressures from the Human Rights Commission.

(c) *To Degrade the Militancy in the Insurgency Affected State/Region*

This term gives wider powers and scope to the army to operate in the insurgency affected area. It implies taking all measures, military and non-military which would degrade

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the militancy. The measures would include sealing of the borders, carrying out counter insurgency operations in the depth areas, protecting the lines of communication/routes of maintenance, defending vital military installations, but not the civilian installations, carrying out control measures like searches of vehicles and houses and undertaking measures to win over the hearts and minds of the people, detaining suspects for limited periods and so on. The army is expected to act on its own without being formally requisitioned and would be vested with powers under the Special Forces Act, 1958. While conducting operations, the army would take care not to alienate the local population and honour the laws on human rights violations. The civil administration is expected to function and ensure the smooth functioning of the normal services like transportation, banks, post offices, schools/colleges, power and water supply and so on. The civil administration would also ensure the security of its installations such as radio stations, banks/post offices, religious places and even certain VIPs. Such a military aim appears quite comprehensive and fulfils the operating parameters for the army as well as the civil administration.

(d) *To Eliminate Insurgency in a Given Area/State/Region*

Such a military aim has wider ramifications of undertaking the total onus of dealing with the insurgency by the army and the civil administration being absolved of carrying out its share of the responsibility. It also implies placing the civil administration and its resources at the disposal of the army. Understandably such a situation can only arise in the case of martial law being imposed and is unacceptable to any system of democracy, wherein the political leadership is the supreme authority.

The above analysis would clearly indicate that the military aim which is generally in conformity with the political

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aim would be closer to degrading the militancy and thereby restoring normalcy in a given area/state/region.

I have broadly analysed the ramifications of the various military aims that may be stipulated by the army and feel that, "to degrade the militancy in a given area/state/region" with the stipulations of not alienating the local population and honouring the laws on human rights violations, may be closer to the task assigned to the army rather than have a limited aim of "killing/apprehending maximum militants and recovering maximum weapons/equipment/warlike stores". I will be pleased if this generates some food for thought in the army hierarchy and they take a fresh look at the military aim stipulated in the official publication of 1990.

The next major issue that is related to the military aim is the degree to which the aim is to be achieved. In most of the situations, the aim is limited to only the containment of the situation. Generally, containment rather than the resolution of the problem is acceptable as it is enough to create near normal environment for the government to initiate the political process. Such a stance would probably also suit the sponsors of the insurgency as their aim would be to keep the pot boiling without crossing the threshold of tolerance. This is a moot point and requires serious deliberations because the subsequent formulation of the policy and approach to the problem is based on this vital decision.

Approach and Military Strategy

It must be recognised that combating insurgency is a politico-military problem. At one end of the continuum is essentially the military approach to counter insurgency. This strategy is rooted in the assumption that insurgency warfare is a contest between the insurgents and the government in the management of coercion. Insurgent movements have generally been viewed at least initially to be the result of a

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conspiracy by small groups of criminals. They are seen as the cause of the problem rather than a symptom of the social, economic and political ills that beset the society in that particular state. In the initial stages therefore, the military approach has considerable appeal. If the insurgents do not enjoy the support of the majority of the population, like what happened in Punjab, then the threat can be eliminated before it gains serious momentum. Even if the threat persists, the military option appears to be the best strategy to ensure that the government does not lose against the insurgents. The key issue is that the insurgents are viewed as a military threat to the state and a direct challenge to law and order. This threat obviously requires a military response as the use of force must be contested with a reciprocal use of even greater force. The military, therefore, becomes the lead agency of the state and is employed to not only bring pressure to bear directly on insurgent groups, but also those supporting or sympathising individuals and organisations. Continued military pressure alone, however, has the serious limitation, in that, the use of military to dissuade people from supporting the insurgents backfires because the methods employed by the military invariably alienate large sections of the population and add to the strength of the insurgents and their supporters. The grave consequences of using the military in the lead role are that of Philippines in 1940 and the American repression in South Vietnam. At the other end of the continuum is the political approach to combat insurgency. The aim of resorting to this approach is to address the main grievances of the people and thus undermine the base support to the insurgents. The government fights the campaign on all fronts, political, economic, social, cultural and administrative and military. The government aims at providing corruption free governance and carries out developmental activities to not only improve the general economic standards of the people, but also to generate

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employment, especially for the youth. In this approach, the military is used to support the counter insurgency effort, but is not the lead agency. This approach helps the government to isolate the insurgents from their bases of support making them more vulnerable to the counter insurgency operations launched by the military and the police. This approach also helps in gaining valuable intelligence which contributes to the launching of successful operations against the insurgents. However, this approach can be extremely expensive and lack of adequate resources forces the political leadership to depend more and more on the military option.

It is apparent that during counter insurgency, the policies of the government may vacillate along the continuum between the military approach and the political approach. The impact of the counter insurgency policy on the state will clearly then depend on the mix of the two approaches. Initially, the policy is likely to be close to the military option and then gradually shift towards the political approach being dominant.

The key issue that needs emphasis is that the military is to be employed in a supportive role and not in the lead role. This was one of the main reasons for success in Punjab. Regrettably, the army is being used to play the lead role in Kashmir and the North Eastern States with the government and the local police remaining in the back seat. For any success in these states, the local police has to be re-organised, better equipped and motivated to act as an effective force so that the army can be used as the cutting edge in a supportive role to launch operations only when a particular situation demands.

Lastly, besides being a mix of the political and the military approach, there is a need for greater integration of resources. Insurgency has to be tackled through a joint operations command with the army, para military forces, the local police

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and the civil administration acting as complementary to each other. While normal law and order is a state subject, insurgency has a different dimension to the security of the state and, therefore, needs the involvement of the centre in resolving the issue.

Viewed from the military point of view, as a rule, the security forces have been religiously adopting the approach of winning the hearts and minds of the people because it is believed that the local population is the focus in resolving the conflict. But within the army, there have been divergent opinions on this aspect. Some military commanders particularly the hardliners think that it is not always necessary to direct the efforts towards adhering to this approach. They advocate a tougher approach known as the "terror by terror". This approach was pursued by some of the field commanders in Sri Lanka (Op Pawan). It implies striking terror in the minds of the militants as well as their supporters. It involves killing or detaining and harassing the close relatives of the militant leaders involved in the conflict so as to put pressure on them to give up. For example, there was an incident in Jaffna where a soldier who had inadvertently strayed outside the post was picked up by the LTTE and all efforts to recover him were in vain. The affected formation then decided to detain the brother of one of the top leaders and release him only on the condition that the soldier be set free. This worked out and the soldier was released within 12 hours, the deadline set for the release of the soldier. The success of this approach strengthened the hardliners for subsequent conduct of operations using this approach. The field commanders, therefore, have a choice between these two very divergent approaches. This is a challenge senior commanders in the field will face. The choice would depend upon the discretion of the local commander depending upon the situation and his professional experience.

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Military Strategy

Keeping in view the military aim and the degree to which it is to be achieved, the formulation of the military strategy will depend upon the consideration of the following factors that have a role to play:

(a) People.
(b) Militants.
(c) Civil Administration.
(d) Foreign Support.
(e) Environment
(f) Security Forces.

Each of the above factors are discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

(a) *People*

The local population is the most important factor. The militants draw their support and sustenance from the local population. Most of the militants are locals. The militants aim at converting the belief of the locals to their goal/cause and endeavour at gaining their sympathy so as to gradually alienate them from the government and the security forces. They could achieve this either voluntarily or through coercion, if need be. The shadow of fear of the gun looms large on the minds of the local people. The militants create a situation of chaos and uncertainty compelling the security forces to employ repressive measures. The security forces too depend largely on the support of the local people. Therefore, while conducting operations, they are conscious of not causing undue harassment and humiliation to the common man. It is therefore, the attitude of the local population towards the security forces and the militants that influences the final decision. The security forces must, therefore,

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generally plan to win the hearts and minds of the local people except in specific situations where a hard line approach may have to be adopted.

(b) *Militants*

The militants are the real adversary of the security forces. Some of them are the hard core while the majority comprises the support cadre. The militants belong to different groups with differing ideologies and goals. While most of them are locals, a few could be from the sponsored agency/country. Lately,even some mercenaries seem to join certain militant organisations. Their level of training and holding of weapons/ equipment differs. Most of the militant groups have a good communication network. The tactics and *modus operandi* of the various militant groups are quite similar except that some are fundamentalists while others are moderates. All these groups draw their sustenance from the local people. They operate in certain designated areas. The inter-group rivalry due to differences in ideology/goals could be exploited to their advantage by the security forces.

(c) *Civil Administration*

In an insurgency environment, the civil administration is generally rendered ineffective. The government officials including the police personnel are subverted and threatened from carrying out their functions resulting in the breakdown of the law and order situation, as also the disruption of public services amenities. Development activities come to a grinding halt. Education in schools/colleges suffers. The number of unemployed youth increases, providing a ready cadre for the militants. The civil administration will need to continue functioning to sustain its credibility despite the threat from the militants.

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(d) *Foreign Support*

Hostile neighbours identify the cause of dissent and then support the movement in the territory of its adversary. What initially starts in the form of moral support culminates into a full scale proxy war. The hostile country organises the training and equipping of the militants. These militants are then infiltrated across the borders to destabilise the situation in the adversary's territory. For this purpose, a series of training camps are established. Communication facilities are also provided for passing of directives and controlling the operations. Besides the common borders, other neighbouring countries are also used as conduits for infiltrating the militants. The cause of the militants is also given wide publicity with the aim of internationalising the issue and winning the sympathy/support of the international community for the movement. The extent of support is limited to keeping the pot boiling without letting it cross the threshold of tolerance so as to let the adversary 'bleed through a thousand cuts'.

(e) *Environment*

The environment would include aspects of terrain and people as well as proximity to the neighbouring countries especially those hostile in nature. While the factor of the people has already been discussed above, the influence of terrain in evolving military strategy would be highlighted hereafter.

Terrain: Whether mountainous or flat lands, developed with good network of roads or not, will generally dictate the type of mobility the militants and the security froces enjoy. Mountainous terrain will also indicate the likely infiltration routes through passes/gullies that need to be blocked. The plains sector may dictate fencing of the borders.

Mountainous terrain, particularly when covered with forests, would hinder the movement of the security forces and facilitate

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easy movement for the militants as it provides concealed routes of movement and hide-outs. The security forces may have to rely more on helicopters for speedy transportation of men and material. The proximity of the region especially when its borders are running along those of the hostile country would facilitate easy trans border movement of the militants and, therefore, require sealing of such borders.

Presence of lakes/lagoons in the insurgency affected area would require their surveillance and acquiring means of transportation by the security forces.

Thickly populated areas like towns/cities *vis-a-vis* rural areas would influence the deployment and pattern of operations of the security forces. While the militants would attempt to wrest control of important cities/towns, the security forces would need to deny these falling to the militants. Vital railway/road networks and vital civil/military installations would be lucrative targets for the militants and the security forces will need to ensure their security.

(f) *Security Forces*

The army augmented by the para-military forces/central police organisations becomes the main instrument of dealing with an insurgency situation. The army, primarily trained for its primary role of fighting a conventional war is required to orientate itself to fighting the militancy. Taking into account the type of equipment, training and above all the ethos, the army becomes the cutting edge and other security forces assume a supportive role. The army would, therefore, need to be kept free from holding ground for carrying out mobile operations. Other security forces could thus undertake tasks static in nature. Since security forces are not equipped for carrying out such tasks, specialised weapons/equipment would need to be provided to give them an edge over the militants.

A detailed analysis of the above factors and keeping in view the overall political aim, a viable military strategy could

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be formulated to encompass the following:

(a) Isolation of the militants from the foreign bases providing support.

(b) Conducting operations to degrade the military potential of the insurgents by killing/apprehending maximum number of militants and recovering maximum weapons/equipment/other warlike stores.

(c) Adopting measures to win the hearts and minds of the people.

(d) Restoring/sustaining the morale of the local police and establishing the credibility of the local government.

(e) Ensuring security of own lines of communications and vulnerable areas/points.

(f) Respecting laws on human rights.

In pursuit of the strategy to isolate the militants from the foreign bases, a high level decision would be required at the national level regarding raids/air strikes at the training camps/ bases across the borders and the violation of the international borders in pursuance of the policy of 'hot pursuit'. In other words pursue a 'pro-active strategy'.

Political Aim

I would like to suggest that while the army pursues its military aim and strategy to degrade the militancy, it is the political process which will finally resolve the issue. In this context, the state/central government must take positive steps at the political, economic and social levels to meet the aspirations of the people of that state/region and assuage their feelings of alienation and economic deprivation. It needs no emphasis that unless there is a strong political will to resolve the militancy, the army will be left to itself in its long drawn struggle with the militants leading to an unending slogging match.

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Political Strategy/Action Plan

The government will need to pursue a multi-pronged strategy and evolve an action plan with clear directives to different ministries/departments laying down a timeframe for implementation with a sense of accountability. The action plan should constitute the following measures:

(a) Pursue diplomatic efforts to restrain the hostile country from interference through proxy war and internationalising the issue preferably through bilateral dialogue

(b) Strengthening the democratic process by relying on a responsive state government to provide clean administration, generate employment, organise an effective police force and promote developmental activities through financial assistance, if necessary.

(c) Take political initiatives in meeting the legitimate aspirations of the people (grant of autonomy?), marginalise and isolate the militants particularly the foreign mercenaries from the local population.

(d) Adopt a pro-active approach by fully backing and allowing a free hand to the army/ para military forces in carrying out their arduous task of degrading the militancy.

(e) Management of the media to counter the hostile propoganda and carry out psychological operations.

(f) Ensure improvement in intelligence through better coordination.

(g) Ensure respect for and enforcement of laws on human rights.

It must be appreciated that the formulation/issue of a comprehensive directive to include the national aim, the national strategy/an action plan and allocation of tasks to

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various ministries/agencies will help in implementing the same with a sense of accountability. Thereafter, the centre should allocate the necessary resources, coordinate the activities and finally monitor the situation.

Concept of Operations

In an insurgency environment, different types of troops are involved. The concept of operations would imply the method of utilising these troops for different tasks, that is:

(a) Sealing of the borders.

(b) Conduct of anti-militant operations to kill/apprehend maximum militants and recover maximum number of weapons/equipment/other war like stores.

(c) Road opening and road picketting.

(d) Defence of vulnerable areas/points.

The evaluation of troops to tasks is discussed as follows:

(a) *Sealing of the Border*

This is the most important task which involves isolating/ separating the militants from their foreign bases/camps located across the borders in a hostile country. While it is not possible and practicable to seal the borders particularly in the mountainous, riverine terrain or terrain covered with thick jungles, border fencing where possible and laying of mines selectively may help, but cannot totally deter the trans border move of the militants. Considering the nature of terrain and the complexity of the task, it is desirable to employ regular troops for such a task. Where it is not permissible along the international borders, regular troops should be employed in the second/third tier of the deployment leaving the BSF to man the borders. The troops deployed along the borders would need to guard certain border observation posts (BOPs),

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hold strategically/tactically important features and lay ambushes along the likely/appreciated routes of infiltration/ exfiltration. The essence of operating along the borders is that the deployment must be a mix of static and mobile defence. While the position of BOPs and some important posts remains fixed, the ambushes need to be laid with a lot of imagination. The position of these ambushes must shift during the night/bad weather conditions. It must be remembered that the best results in terms of catches are always at the borders where the militants are attempting to infiltrate/exfiltrate.

(b) *Conduct of Counter Insurgency Operations in Depth Areas*

In the depth areas, the troops are deployed on a counter insurgency grid with a view to dominate the local population. The controversy is with regard to the pattern of the grid; whether it should be based on company or platoon posts. Keeping in view that the troops need to not only defend their posts, but also carry out counter insurgency operations like raids, cordon and search, lay ambushes and so on, it would be better to establish posts at company level. However, certain platoon posts may also have to be established in a given area of responsibility. The next question relates to the employment of troops for this task. Should the regular troops, be employed or can the para-military forces also be entrusted with this task? Ideally, this task should be assigned to regular troops, but since there are never enough regular troops, para-military forces like the BSF could also be employed on such tasks. In such a case, these troops should be placed under the operational control of the army. From the bases thus established, troops should conduct anti-militant operations based on actionable intelligence. For this purpose, the battalion/company commanders would need to create their own local intelligence network. The troops must be prevented from getting into a fixed defence mentality and

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should frequently move out to dominate the given area of responsibility and deter the militants from mixing with the local population. Their presence and conduct must instill confidence in the locals so that they willingly provide information about the militants and not allow them to disrupt normal life.

(c) *Road Opening/Picquetting*

The road communications are likely targets of the militants who would aim at disrupting the move of men and material to the forward areas. They would do so by ambushing convoys and laying improvised explosive devices (IEDs) to blow up vehicles. The security of the long and tenuous road communications especially in areas like J&K and the North East region pose a serious challenge to the security forces. Detailed Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)/drills would, therefore, have to be worked out for the move and protection of convoys/picquetting of the route. The troops employed for road picquetting must be mobile, have reliable communication network and an engineer complement. Due to heavy demand on regular troops for other tasks enumerated earlier, these tasks should be assigned to para-military forces/central police organisations/territorial army units. However, certain regular army troops like armoured/artillery/air defence/mechanised infantry battalions and even services units could be employed for such tasks after necessary orientation training.

(d) *Defence of Vulnerable Areas/Points*

In order to achieve certain moral ascendancy over the security forces, the militants target vital installations for attacks. The targets may include civilian targets like radio/TV stations, banks and military targets like ammunition/ petroleum dumps. The security of these installations assumes greater importance because these areas are generally also

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accessible to the civilian work force. These targets being highly vulnerable must be adequately guarded. The responsibility for guarding these areas would generally fall on the shoulders of the para-military forces/Central Police Organisations and Territorial Army/Defence Security Corps units. It would be desirable to place guarding of civilian installations under command of the civil administration while those guarding the army installations would be under army control.

A discussion/evaluation of the various tasks indicates the following manner of employment of troops:

(a) Regular troops should act as the cutting edge and be employed mainly in conducting anti-militant operations like cordon and search, ambushes and raids. Where possible they should also be deployed along the borders to prevent trans border movement of militants. Armoured, artillery, engineers and services units could be usefully employed to look after the lines of communications, picquetting duties and as escorts of convoys.

(b) The para-military forces should generally be employed to guard the borders duly backed up by regular troops. When deployed on the anti-militancy grid in depth areas, they should be given specific areas of operational responsibility and placed under the operational control of the army.

(c) Central Police Organisations like the CRPF and CISF should best be employed on static tasks of providing security to vital installations like radio/TV stations, banks, post offices and escorts for railways. These should function directly under the Director General of Police of the state concerned.

(d) Defence Security Corps and Territorial Army (TA)

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units are ideal for guarding military installations like ammunition and petrol dumps.

It is here that I would like to emphasize on certain important aspects which must be borne in mind while conducting counter insurgency operations:

(a) The focus should remain on the local population as the attitude of the people is the key to the success of counter insurgency operations. Care should, therefore, be taken not to alienate the local people while implementing measures of population control. The locals should be respected, helped and protected. Most importantly, their dignity should be honoured.

(b) Intelligence is vital for the conduct of successful and cost effective counter insurgency operations.

(c) In a prolonged struggle where stalemate sets in, it is the battle of wills; the will of the militants to pursue their goals and the will of the security forces to continue maintaining relentless pressure. Maintaining the morale and, therefore, the motivation of troops in such a situation becomes a major function of command of leaders at all levels.

(d) The management of media to the best advantage of the security forces is vital, particularly at the strategic level (corps/army commander levels).

(e) Counter insurgency operations demand an innovative as opposed to stereotyped approach at the tactical level (division and below levels).

(f) Lastly, the ultimate aim is to restore normalcy and help the government in seeking a political solution to the problem. Coordination with the civil administration and unified effort in resolving the insurgency must thus remain focused in the minds of commanders at all levels.

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Force Levels

Like mountains eat troops, there is always a demand for additional troops in an insurgency affected area. For example, it was only a part of an infantry division that was initially inducted into Sri Lanka. But when the conflict started with the LTTE, the force level had to be built up to almost four times. Similarly in J&K, additional troops including formations from the North East had to be inducted to meet the growing challenge. Each military commander, therefore, faces the dilemma of either demanding or releasing additional troops for counter insurgency operations. The legitimate question that arises is as to how to arrive at the correct figures. After all, while the local formation commander would like to have more troops at his disposal, the higher commander who has to release these additional troops is always at a loss to meet the increasing demand of the field commander. This is a very complex issue and requires deliberations on the following aspects to arrive at near acceptable figures:

(a) *Number of Militants*

Past experience has shown that just to contain the insurgency, the ratio of troops to militants should be 6:1. However, the resolution of the problem requires the proportion to be raised to 15:1. It may sound very simple, but the complexity of the problem is on account of the inability to assess the exact number of militants. The figures quoted by various agencies viz, the army, CPO, RAW, IB and so on are quite at variance. Therefore, since there is never a consensus on the number of militants, there will always be differences of opinion with regard to the force levels required. In this context, it would be advisable to take an average of the realistic estimates of various agencies and that figure should serve as the basis of working out the estimated number of militants and thereafter the force levels depending

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upon whether the aim is restricted to containment or resolution of the issue.

(b) *Terrain and Area of Responsibility*

It is normally accepted that a platoon post in the plains sector should be able to look after approximately 4-5 sq kms of an area. Therefore, an infantry battalion should be capable of effectively dominating/looking after an area of 180 sq kms. For the mountains, the requirement of troops would be enhanced by 25 percent. It would be of interest to know that battalions thus far have been looking after areas as indicated below in various theaters:

(a) **J&K**

(i)	Valley	-	196 sq kms
(ii)	Doda	-	828 sq kms
(iii)	Average	-	289 sq kms

(b) **Punjab**

(i)	During elections	-	170 sq kms
(ii)	Post elections	-	446 sq kms

(c) **North East Region**

(i)	Nagaland	-	750 sq kms
(ii)	Manipur	-	769 sq kms
(iii)	Overall average	-	762 sq kms

(Conversely, 1000 sq kms of area has equivalent of 3.5 battalions in J&K, 5.8 battalions during elections, 2.2 battalions during post-election period in Punjab as compared to 1.3 battalions in the North East).

(c) *Training of Militants*

Where the militants operating in a particular area are reported to be better trained/equipped, the density of troops would generally be more than other areas. This factor may also have to be taken into account while deciding on the type of troops to be deployed.

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(d) *Attitude of Local Population*

The local population could be categorised as sympathetic, neutral or anti-militant. The density of troops would be more in areas which are sympathetic towards the militants. In other areas, token presence or even patrolling may suffice.

Flushing out of Militants from Religious Places

Militants taking shelter in gurdwaras/mosques is not uncommon. Incidents of militants holing up in the Golden Temple in Amritsar and later in the famous mosque of Hazratbal as also the shrine of Charar-e-Sharif are well-known. This is nothing new. Insurgents/revolutionaries taking shelter in churches were common features even during World War II. With situations as grave as these, the government is always under the dilemma whether to flush them out by physical storming or evicting them by a process of starving them out.

I remember the tensic.. that had gripped the nation before the launching of operation 'Blue Star'. At that time, I was the Indian military attaché in Kabul (Afghanistan). Sensing the sentiments of a large population of Sikhs in Afghanistan regarding a possible storming of the Golden Temple, the then Ambassador of India, JN Dixit, asked me my views on the military aspect of such operations. I had then expressed strong views against the necessity of troops physically assaulting the premises of the temple and alternatively suggested their eviction through the process of isolating the temple, cutting off supplies and essential services like water, electricity and telephone services. But unfortunately, for reasons best known to the military hierarchy, operation 'Blue Star' was launched with grave consequences, including the assasination of late Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi and the late General Vaidya.

A similar situation later on was successfully tackled by employing the National Security Guard (NSG), and operation

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'Black Thunder' achieved the results without entry into the premises of the temple. This example was to serve as a guide for tackling the situation in the Valley when the militants were flushed out of the Hazratbal mosque in 1993 without firing a shot.

However, history repeated itself in operation 'Blue Star' which was undertaken to flush out Mast Gul and his compatriots who had occupied defences in the shrine of Charar-e-Sharif. The operation was a great failure. It not only led to the escape of Mast Gul, but also the destruction of the shrine. Once again, the physical assault on the shrine had hurt the sentiments of the locals and the wounds were too deep to be healed soon. This operation negated all the fine work that the army had done till then.

From the examples cited above, it should be clear that it would be better to flush out militants holed up in religious places like gurdwaras, mosques and temples by exercising all other options except to physically assault the premises. But where insuitable, the security forces should flush out militants from religious places by ensuring that minimum/no damage is caused to the structure.

Employment of Security Forces to Rescue Hostages

The taking of four foreign nationals as hostages had generated a lot of criticism both within the country and at the international level of the inability of the government to rescue them. At some stage, there were also rumours/news of foreign troops being employed for this task. The employment of foreign troops was rightly resisted/disallowed by Lt. Gen Surinder Singh, PVSM the then Northern Army Commander. Even the employment of the security forces and the army in particular is a debatable point. Firstly, employment of the army, including commandos, for the release of such hostages would set a precedence for the future, a commitment which

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will be extremely difficult to honour. Secondly, the hostages getting killed in such operations cannot be ruled out. Killing of even one hostage,.especially when he/she is a foreign national would have serious ramifications. Therefore, it would be advisable not to specifically assign such tasks to the security forces, but to depend on incidental, chance encounters, wherein the security forces may avail of the opportunity to get the hostage released. The best option is to exert political pressure by international agencies to obtain such releases.

Accepting the Demands of the Militants in Lieu of Hostages

The militants resort to taking important government officials, relations of political leaders and even foreign nationals as hostages to either obtain the release of some of their important leaders or to extract large sums of money. This really amounts to blackmail. This is a well-known tactics of the terrorist groups where they resort to hijacking of commercial airlines and taking the passengers on board as hostages. Past experience has shown that the government has to be firm in dealing with such cases and should not succumb to the pressure of the militants/terrorists. An unique example wherein the government gave in to the demands of the militants was the release of Rubaiya, daughter of Shri Mufti Mohd Sayeed, the then Home Minister, in lieu of the release of important leaders of Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF). This was an unfortunate incident wherein the acceptance of the demands of the militants gave fillip to the militant organisation. In fact, this incident was probably the turning point of insurgency in the Valley. It is not understood as to why the government accepted the demands. Was it just because she was the daughter of the Home Minister himself? If that was the case, had it not set a bad precedence for future negotiations? After all, the government should have realised the grave consequences of such a decision because

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the life of every human being is as important and precious as that of Dr Rubaiya. Further, the government should have also appreciated that no harm would come to Dr Rubaiya as that was against the code of the militants and any harm to her would have eroded the image of the concerned militant group. Lastly, the political leaders must understand that they run the risk of such incidents as also threat to their life and must, therefore, be prepared to pay the price.

The idea of highlighting these two incidents was to drive home the point that while the militants will resort to taking hostages to press acceptance of their demands for the release of such hostages, the government must be firm in dealing with such cases. While secret negotiations to obtain the release of such hostages must be undertaken through emissaries, the final settlement should not be made public.

Hot Pursuit

There are very strong exponents of the concept of 'hot pursuit'. They always quote Israel as an example. There is no doubt that the right to 'hot pursuit' concept while dealing with militants operating from bases located in neighbouring countries merits consideration and is justified as a retaliatory step in response to the proxy war, it is also felt that exercising this option will deter the hostile country in sponsoring/ supporting militancy in Indian territory particularly when militant groups are accompanied by the nationals of that country, sometimes disguised as militants.

However, it must be understood that such aggressive posture of either conducting air strikes or raids on known militant camps requires a strong will on the part of the government. The stakes are high and the nation must be prepared to go to full scale war as a gesture of intolerance of any outside interference by a hostile neighbour. Such threshold of intolerance has to be spelt out/laid down as a

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guideline failing which the threshold of tolerance will continue to expand with infinite elasticity because we are basically very tolerant people.

Threshold of Tolerance

It is a common 'cliché' being used in the higher echelons of the military hierarchy. It is propounded that no hard military option is advocated till the insurgency crosses the threshold of tolerance. But unfortunately, nobody has clearly stipulated that threshold. If one goes by the philosophy and attitude of the Indian community at large, we are a very tolerant nation. We tolerate the poor hygienic conditions in our localities, the pollution in the big cities, the breakdown of water and electricity during the peak summer months and continue waiting patiently for hours at the platform for trains to arrive at their own timings. So there seems to be no limit to our level of tolerance; it is like rubber and keeps on stretching.

But notwithstanding the high level of tolerance Indians have, there has to be a limit to everything. It is time that we define that limit beyond which a hard military option would become inevitable failing which the hostile country(ies) will continue to exploit our weakness and bleed the country through a thousand cuts. There may be different views on this threshold of tolerance, but everybody will probably agree that any overt assistance to the militants by and/or direct participation of the regular troops of the hostile country by crossing the borders to capture key defended localities or any vital military/civil installation would constitute a grave enough reason to declare war on that hostile country.

The Kill Ratio

The ratio of casualties of security forces *vis-à-vis* the militants known as the 'kill ratio' being maintained around 1:5

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or more seems to have become the yardstick for measuring the morale and success/failure of troops. But while this is an important factor, it should not be the only parameter for evaluating morale and success/failure. There are other parameters which are equally vital and must be looked into. For example, the dispensation of equal financial compensation to the martyrs is very vital for the morale of troops.

Interaction Between Officials of Services and State Government

There is a general reluctance to freely interact on the part of officials of one service with the officials of other services/ state government on grounds of precedence of rank/service. This is very detrimental to the spirit of collective responsibility and must be ruthlessly curbed. Officials must shed their personal egos and misplaced ideas of precedence. There should be better interaction, cooperation and sharing of accountability between the officials.

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6

Combat Tactics in Counter Insurgency Operations

Appendix B—Memories of OP PAWAN

It was for the first time in 1987 in the history of the Indian Army when operations were conducted at division/ brigade level in an intense phase of insurgency in Sri Lanka. The Indian Army till then was used to tactical level operations confined to cordon and search, raids, ambushes and road picquetting conducted at battalion level and below. But the task of clearing the Jaffna penninsula from the stranglehold of the LTTE posed an entirely new dimension in fighting. Unfortunately, the lack of experience particularly of our senior commanders (brigade/divisional commanders) in such an environment led to heavy casualties to our troops in the initial stages of the conflict. Besides inflicting serious losses to both men and material, the LTTE was successful in preventing the Indian,Army from penetrating even the outer tier of its defenses for almost over ten days.

My brigade though truncated (with one battalion at the commencement of operations and later built up to two infantry battalions) and inducted almost ten days after the commencement of hostilities was able to enter Jaffna on

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the third day of its commitment. I would like to attribute the use of innovative tactics as the main reason behind this speedy advance.

I later learnt that the use of innovative tactics was one of the reasons for my being conferred with the prestigious award of Uttam Yudh Seva Medal (UYSM). I, therefore, consider this book as the best medium to mention about the tactics employed by my formation which were quite unknown, took the LTTE by total surprise and brought about fresh impetus to the progress of operations of the neighbouring formations which were held up on the periphery of Jaffna town.

I recall the words of Lt Gen SS Mehta, AVSM (then major & MA to General Sundarji) when he said, "Sir, the operations of your brigade were like an injection which has revived the life of a dying man". I thought this compliment from a junior officer who had been a witness to the whole operations was quite encouraging.

Before I discuss the innovative tactics used by my formation, I would like to highlight the inadequacies in combat tactics employed by some of the commanders who were committed from the day of commencement of hostilities.

(a) *Concept of 'Advance to Contact'*

The first mistake appeared to be that the clearing operations were conducted like an 'advance to contact' operation adhering to the method laid down in the General Staff pamphlet. This meant advancing along the roads (axes) and having a leading platoon, vanguard company and so on. Such tactics allowed the LTTE to engage troops effectively from built up areas, inflict heavy casualties and hold up the advance as there was no space for deployment of troops in the typical assault formation to clear the

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opposition. Troops thus continued to reinforce failure and in the bargain sustained casualties with minimum damage to the LTTE. More importantly, employment of such tactics was not able to dislodge the LTTE from their defences.

(b) *Employment of Armour (Tanks)*

The tanks in the absence of any mines were employed to lead the advance. These tanks had no space for manoeuverability inside the built up areas and had very restricted/limited observation and fields of fire. These tanks, therefore, became vulnerable and the LTTE blew them up either with IEDs or by targeting them with rocket launchers.

(c) *Night vs Day Operations*

Our conventional warfare advocated fighting in built up areas during day. This approach was proved wrong when dealing with militants in urban centers.

(d) *Fire Discipline*

There were occasions when LTTE deceived our troops with the use of crackers from tree tops and forced them to open fire indiscriminately. Lack of fire discipline on certain occasions led to the 'puffing off' of all the ammunition and thereafter the LTTE fired on the troops like sitting ducks. Thus, ignoring the basic/elementary lessons in tactics of exercising fire control led to a lot of avoidable casualties. In one of the incidents, when caught up in such a situation, the Gorkhas had to use their traditional weapon, the 'khukhri'.

(e) *Stereotype Drills*

Our basic teaching of response to fire by going to ground looking for cover before returning fire, was also

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exploited by the LTTE to inflict maximum casualties on our troops.

Fortunately for us, I took the opportunity of exchanging views with those who had already been through the operations before launching my troops. I was lucky to meet Lt Gen JS Dhillon, PVSM, YSM (then commander of one of the sister formations) and my discussion with him was very useful in reorienting ourselves. I rate him as one of the finest field commanders that the Indian Army has had and my belief was vindicated when he was later appointed General Officer Commanding XV Corps to deal with the insurgency in the Valley. His services were enviable and led to the successful conduct of parliamentary/assembly elections in the Valley. I must admit that my formation too was given the task of advancing along certain axis/axes and entering the Jaffna city from a particular direction. Though, it was a similar task as given to other formations, I approached it from a different angle adopting new tactics, which later were termed as 'innovative'. I will not touch upon basic/elementary tactics of fire discipline and drills at lower level, there are a couple of other issues which merit consideration.

Concept of Clearing Operation

When tasked to clear certain areas like towns/suburbs, the formation should approach the objective on a broad front instead of adopting a narrow front or committing troops in echelons. The advance to the objective should be cross-country instead of along roads. The approach should be multi-directional. This is how my formation acted on this broad concept. At the battalion level, the objective was approached with two/three companies advancing on a broad front and enveloping the objective from different directions. Similarly, when I had two battalions, both of

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them were employed simultaneously to envelop an objective. The multi-directional approach on a broad front unnerved the LTTE and they were threatened with being surrounded/isolated. They therefore, moved out from the defences and it is when they were on the move that Indian troops engaged them while keeping themselves in advantageous positions. Adherence to this concept later on also led to the elimination of a large group of important LTTE leaders and recovery of a large cache of weapons/ ammunitions in an encounter at Urelu. This became a case study at the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington.

Night vs Day Advance

As opposed to advance by day, the units/subunits moved during night to approach the given objective and surrounded it before daybreak. During day the troops occupied advantageous positions and shot at any move of militants. The move by night caught the LTTE totally by surprise and this concept was exploited to tremendous advantage in all operations.

Employment of Tanks/ICVs

If the operations due to some compulsions were to be conducted during day, then the tanks/ICVs were employed in an unorthodox manner. The tanks/ICVs were kept behind the advancing infantry instead of leading the advance. Whenever the infantry was held up due to fire, the tanks/ ICVs were employed to shoot over the infantry to destroy the target and thus enable the infantry to close in on the objective. I recollect only one instance where this concept was ignored wherein a tank commander seeing an open patch rushed ahead of the infantry and paid the price. One of the tanks and its crew were blown up almost 50 feet by an IED. The lesson was brought home, but at what expense!

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This chapter will be incomplete unless I emphasise the army's need to end stereotype operations. Our training particularly at individual/section/platoon levels is biased towards adherence to certain drills. Encounters with insurgents require quick response and there has to be an ingredient of 'newness' to such tactics. For example, I used to observe the road picquetting by a particular battalion and to my surprise found that the positions for LMG & 2" mortar had almost become fixed. One day I rang up the commanding officer of the battalion concerned to go and see for himself the deployment of his troops on road picquetting. I also told him while sitting in the office as to where his LMG & 2" mortar would be. The commanding officer visited the troops on ground and was surprised to see that the weapons were deployed exactly where I had told him. This incident should highlight the tendency of the troops becoming totally stereotype and repetitive in tactics. These tactics are dangerous and the insurgents take full advantage of this habit to inflict casualties at will.

Bunker Mentality

Anti-militant operations call for aggressiveness and an offensive posture on the part of the security forces. Offensive operations involve seeking contact with the militants to destroy them/their bases.

But it is generally seen that security forces tend to dig down and construct bunkers wherever they are deployed. This approach is defensive in nature and breeds a defensive mentality. Being fixed, the security forces become easy targets of the militant attacks. Such a posture also leads to large number of troops being deployed on sentry and admini-strative duties leaving lesser number of troops for offensive operations. In fact, if it is a platoon post then there are hardly any troops to carry out patrolling/

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mobile operations. Even in a company level post, not more than one platoon worth of troops can be spared for mobile operations, taking into consideration that one-third troops are on duty and another one-third taking rest for having carried out duties at night.

The Soviet forces during their stay in Afghanistan had evolved good combat tactics for defence of posts. Except for a pair or two of sentries and tank/BMP crew during day, all others were available for mobile operations.

I feel that the Indian Army has to review its combat tactics as far as the level and defence of posts is concerned. While defence of posts/bases is unavoidable, greater risks have to be taken by employing barest minimum of troops for defence, and releasing maximum troops for mobile/ offensive operations. It would also be better to have minimum company level posts.

Diary of Operations in Sri Lanka

Encouraged by some of the memoirs that I had read during my service, I also decided to record the events as they occurred during the intensive phase of the war with LTTE. The reader may draw some useful lessons from this diary. I am therefore reproducing it without any changes. It is as authentic as can be.

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7

Intelligence

Intelligence is one of the most important key result areas in counter insurgency operations, but unfortunately, there is a void both at the strategic as well as the tactical level. This inadequacy has been felt at all levels, but the army continues to function with either ad hoc arrangements or remains dependent on the other intelligence agencies like the Research & Analysis Wing (R&AW) and the Intelligence Bureau (IB). For example, in Sri Lanka, there was hardly any information about the LTTE and troops were inducted to fight them with a serious handicap. It was a pity that we did not even have the maps of that sector. I remember having carried some limited photostat copies from the Army Headquarters prior to induction and these were distributed at a limited scale of about five copies per infantry battalion.

The report of the Kargil Review Committee has highlighted the following aspects:

- Each intelligence gathering agency is diligent in protecting its own turf.
- The military intelligence capability is limited to intelligence of tactical value only and is dependent on R&AW for intelligence related to the potential adversary's military capability.
- There is a need for greater appreciation of the role of intelligence and who needs it most.

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- There is a need for greater coordination between various intelligence agencies.
- There is no tradition of undertaking politico-military games with the participation of those having political and diplomatic expertise.
- Research and Analysis Wing has a virtual monopoly for carrying out Indian threat assessments.
- There is no institutionalised process whereby R&AW, IB, army and BSF officials interact at levels below Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC).
- JIC meetings are generally attended by junior officials.
- Lack of awareness of the critical importance of and the need for assessed intelligence at all levels; JIC reports do not receive the deserved attention at political and higher bureaucratic levels.
- There are no checks and balances in the intelligence system to ensure that the consumer gets all the intelligence that is available and is his due. There is, therefore, no accountability.

Other aspects which merit attention are given in succeeding paragraphs.

Intelligence Acquisition Plan

The intelligence staff should formulate an intelligence acquisition plan which should clearly lay down the specifics of information required and the sources through which such information will follow. Some of the vital aspects which should be included in this plan are as under:

(a) Various militant organisations, their leadership and ideology.

(b) Number of militants in each group, their organisation, weapons, equipment as well as their source of procurement.

(c) Communication equipment, network and code system/procedures.

(d) Cache of arms and ammunition.

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(e) Sources of funds.
(f) Routes of infiltration.
(g) Standard of training, *modus operandi* and morale.

Leadership as Target

The intelligence organisation must concentrate its major effort in identifying the top leadership and either win them over or neutralise them. The target should generally be moderate leaders as they can be won over more easily than the fundamentalists, following the usual principle of intelligence, i.e., "Every man has a weakness and every man has a price." Therefore, the intelligence organisation should either exploit the weakness or pay the price.

Infiltration into Militant Organisations

This is a very difficult task because the militants carry out a thorough screening of any fresh inductees and do not easily accept doubtful cases. This is where the strength lies in their organisation. If own individuals are successfully infiltrated into the militant outfit, then the flow of information becomes rather easy and thus the elimination of specific personalities.

Exploitation of Diversity in Ideology

Having identified and won over the moderate leaders, then, such leadership should be employed to provide not only information, but also assist in eliminating militants. Diversity in ideology should be fully exploited to create fissures within the militant groups so that they start gunning for each other.

Surrenders

Having won over a leader, his services should be fully utilised to arrange surrender of other members of his group

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as well as other groups. It must, however, be ensured that those who surrender under various conditions should be provided full personal security and their identity must be closely guarded to avoid their exposure and subsequent elimination by other rival groups.

Communication Network

As mentioned earlier, the militants have a good network of communications Direction finding and locating instruments must be so deployed that it not only helps in ascertaining the location of their headquarters/leaders, but also in intercepting the same with a view to obtain information about their plans and when necessary destroy the same so as to paralyze their command structure.

Dialogue with Militant Leaders

One of the major tasks of the highest intelligence organisational setup is to initiate the process of dialogue with the leadership of the militant groups amenable to talks. This process may initially be started through common contacts. What may begin at lower levels may finally lead to a meeting between the top leadership. What must be remembered is that the process must be initiated only by those who are vested with the authority to negotiate. The experience of the LTTE was rather unpleasant in this regard. There were so many agencies involved that the LTTE was totally confused as to the agency with which they were to negotiate.Separate efforts were made by various agencies viz., R&AW, IB, the High Commissioner in Colombo, the army and some special representatives of the government as well as the state government of Tamil Nadu. In one of my meetings with late Mr. Krishna Kittu as commander of troops in Vadamarachi (Northern Jaffna) sector, he expressed the frustration of the LTTE in this regard. The government of India did not nominate

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any one agency vested with the necessary authority to progress the talks resulting in a state of total confusion and deadlock/ impasse in resolving the issue. Each agency was trying to score a point over the other. In this game of oneupmanship, the LTTE took advantage. I would not be surprised if we are not indulging in the same manner with the militants in J&K and the North East. The point that I wish to make here is that while initial efforts could be attempted through different agencies with a proper mandate, meetings beyond a certain level must be followed up to the logical culmination by that agency only which has the full authority to negotiate any settlement.

Handling of Detenus

Our system/organisation does not cater for the handling of detenus. It poses serious problems for the army as it is required by law to hand over the militants captured in various encounters to the police. Sometimes the numbers are so large that the civil administration is unable to handle them. The number grows to such proportions that these detenus are not acceptable to the civil administration. Jails are already overswelling with other criminals and there is no more space for the detenus captured by the security forces. And even if there is room for accommodating these detenus, there is total lack of necessary infrastructure for handling them while in custody. They are required to be produced in courts for trials, interrogated and subjected to psychological indoctrination to win them over. The army had set up separate camps for detenus in Jaffna (Sri Lanka) with proper security and arrangements for their educational/vocational training. The state governments where insurgency exists need to have such detenu camps established. Secondly, it is very frustrating for the army when some important militant leaders captured after a lot of hard work/bloodshed are released by the civil administration. The civil administration is best advised to take the army into confidence before such releases.

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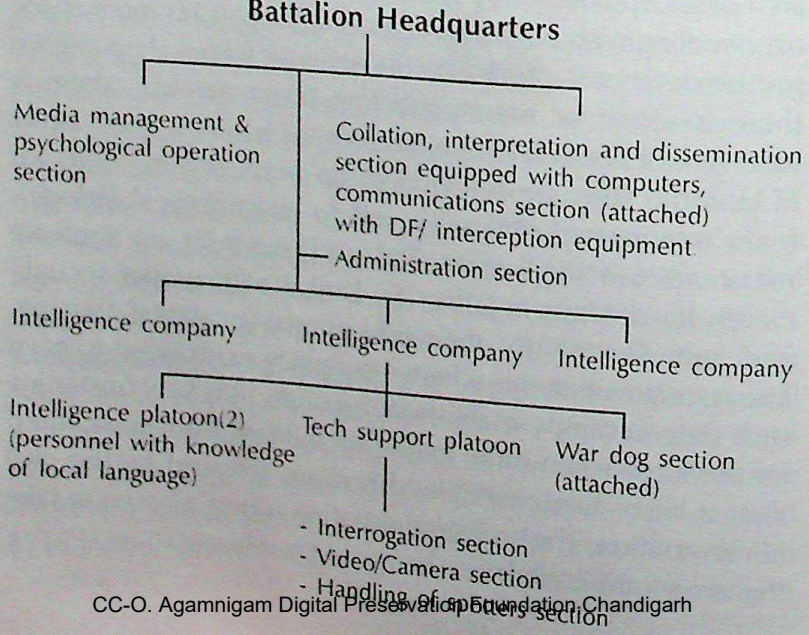
Reorganisation of Intelligence Set Up

The existing intelligence set up (I&FS company) does not meet the requirement of intelligence in an insurgency environment. There is a need to have the following elements in any organisation to meet this vital requirement:

(a) Creating intelligence network and handling of sources/ informers (personnel with local language proficiency).
(b) Handling of spotters and detenus.
(c) Interception of communication network of the insurgents to either gather information or render it ineffective through jamming, as also carry out direction finding (DF) tasks to locate their headquarters.
(d) Provide technical support in the form of interrogators, video/camera team and team of dog handlers.
(e) Media management and psychological operations.

Keeping the above in view, the existing I&FS company should be upgraded to an intelligence battalion at the divisional level and organised as under:


Battalion Headquarters
Media management & psychological operation section
Collation, interpretation and dissemination section equipped with computers, communications section (attached) with DF/ interception equipment
Administration section
Intelligence company
Intelligence company
Intelligence company
Intelligence platoon(2) (personnel with knowledge of local language)
Tech support platoon
War dog section (attached)
- Interrogation section
- Video/Camera section
- Handling of spotters section

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Human Rights Violations

The track record of the human rights violations of the Indian Army has been rather good. Statistics show that in 1993-94, out of the 174 complex cases that came for disposal before the Human Rights Commission of India, only ten referred to alleged excesses, which is merely five percent of the total. The point of interest is that this figure includes cases against para military forces involved in counter insurgency operations. Thirty six cases of these violations were dealt with by the army/para military forces. The real issue is, why violations occur and what steps can be taken to prevent such violations. Some attempt has been made to deal with this issue, but a lot needs to be done in this regard.

It is said that the security forces fight with one hand tied to their back. Unlike conventional warfare, they are restrained to use all their might (aircraft, tanks, artillery and other heavy calibre weapons), as the employment of such weapons would lead to mass casualties in the civil population. The army also has to adhere to the principle of use of minimum force. What constitutes minimum force is rather difficult to quantify. The security forces also face allegations of rape, torture and even killings. While some of these type of allegations may be true, most of the allegations are at the behest of the militants to discredit the security forces.

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Notwithstanding the dilemma of the security forces, the world at large has become sensitive to the issue of human rights violations. It is now believed that in response to private terrorism, the state cannot resort to state terrorism implying that the security forces behaviour cannot be similar to the militants, that violation of human rights by the terrorists does not justify state terrorism.

With the aim of preventing human rights violations, international laws have been formulated and treaties signed by nations. It is, therefore, necessary for the security forces to be conscious of various laws on human rights and operate within the constraints imposed by such laws.

International Humanitarian Laws (IHL)

The humanitarian law of war envisages that the only legitimate object which the states should endeavour to accomplish in war is to weaken the military forces of the enemy (In the context of counter insurgency, it will mean the degradation of the military wing of the militants). By implication, the object of war should be to eliminate a total war. The law protects the wounded, the sick, prisoners of war and civilians who fall into enemy hands from arbitrary treatment. It includes the following seven rules:

(a) An individual is a person in the eyes of the law.

(b) An individual's right to life is invaluable. If he is found in combat or he surrenders, he is not to be subjected to extra judicial killing. He is entitled to judicial and legal guarantees under both international law as well as IHL.

(c) He is entitled to protection from torture, inhuman and degrading treatment.

(d) The occupying power has the clear duty in law to take the wounded and sick. There will be no discrimination on account of sex, religion or race.

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(e) Humanitarian assistance or the offer for humanitarian assistance is never an interference in an armed conflict. It is never regarded as a violation of the sovereignty of the state.

(f) The individual is not responsible for the act of the state. The individual who is taken as a prisoner is responsible only for his act.

(g) Medical personnel are to be protected and if captured, their services have to be used for the care of the prisoners of war.

Distinction must be made between the human rights law and the humanitarian law of war. The difference lies in the fact that while the human rights law guarantees the basic rights and freedom of people, the humanitarian law of war does not have a provision for the protection of the right to freedom of speech and expression or of movement. The human rights law operates, both in peaceful as well as troubled times, but the humanitarian law ceases to have any effect when the armed conflict is over, prisoners of war have been repatriated, civilians set free and all occupied territories liberated.

In practical terms, the law prohibits the following in counter insurgency operations:

(a) Killings of common people and those militants who surrender (civilian casualties).

(b) Upholding of the respect, dignity, and privacy of the individuals (no rape or torture).

(c) Employment of weapons or methods of warfare which cause unnecessary casualties (requires use of minimum force).

(d) Unlawful detention.

Ramification of the above aspects in counter insurgency operations are discussed below:

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Civilian Casualties

The most difficult provision of the law relates to civilian casualties/killings. It is well known that the militants generally thrive amongst the civilian population. Therefore, during any clash between the security forces and the militants, the civilian population is bound to be caught in the cross fire. Past statistics show that the civilian population in an unconventional warfare suffers 90 percent casualties as opposed to 5 percent and 50 percent suffered during World Wars I and II respectively. This calls for major restraint on the part of the security forces and more or less prohibits the employment of major weapons like aircraft, tanks, artillery and mortars against the militants except where the fight/clash is confined to an area away from the centers of population. It also implies use of minimum force, an aspect dealt with subsequently.

Upholding of the respect, dignity and privacy of the individual (no rape/molestation of women, torture and harassment):

(a) *Rape/Molestation*

People must understand why soldiers rape. In one of the books on the subject, the author highlights that rape is a psychological/emotional response rather than a desire for fulfilment of sex. The insurgency environment is such that the militants are very elusive. Continuous operations with no tangible results is very frustrating for the soldier. Therefore, during cordon and search operations, whenever a lady gives a feeling of helplessness, she is likely to invite the emotional response of a soldier to vent his feelings of frustration manifesting itself in rape/molestation. While there is no motive for such an offense, the emotional state and the circumstances under which soldiers rape must be understood. This type of offense is to be clearly differentiated

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from the one committed with a deliberate plan and motive to do so. While such offenses cannot be condoned irrespective of the circumstances under which they have been committed, due consideration must be given to the fact whether it was on account of an emotional response or a planned affair while meting out punishment.

(b) *Torture*

One of the major problems the security forces face is with regard to obtaining information, particularly at the tactical level. During interrogation at the lower levels, information is usually extracted through applying a certain amount of physical force amounting to torture. After all, it is beyond comprehension as to how a militant will be willing to part with information without some physical force being applied. Sometimes such use of physical force (torture) leads to the death of the victim. I remember how difficult it was to break an LTTE militant. The LTTE cadres were so highly motivated that they would commit suicide by swallowing the cyanide capsule they carried around their neck rather than be apprehended and thus give information. If they were unsuccessful in committing suicide, then they had the capacity to withstand the severest of physical torture for atleast 72 hours, the period considered adequate by the LTTE leadership to take all counter measures that could lead to raids on cache of arms/hide outs which were known to the apprehended. The other issue related with this problem is the investigations that follow any case of death due to torture. While extraction of information through using certain amount of physical force may be acceptable, causing death through torture cannot be condoned. The senior commanders, therefore, while not giving tacit approval of torture, should overlook a certain amount of physical force being used during an interrogation, otherwise, the commanders at the junior level will adopt the policy of "play safe".

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(c) *Upholding Dignity and Respect*

It is generally during search operations or while implementing measures to control the population that soldiers tend to be rude to civilians. This can be avoided by announcing to the people to come out and gather at a given place. The place selected for the gathering should have shade in the summer months and provision must also be made for drinking water, toilets and where possible, even medical aid. Similarly, the troops must not unduly harrass people while carrying out searches of vehicles and houses.

Use of Minimum Force

This is a very controversial issue and more often than not, the security forces are charged with the use of excessive force. But it must be appreciated that a soldier is trained to shoot to kill. Therefore, whenever soldiers retaliate/respond to any firing by the militants, casualties even to some civilians are inevitable. Though it is rather difficult to define or measure minimum force, the local commander should be able to justify, if required, the force level and the weaponry used in relation to that of the militants. Notwithstanding the problem of quantifying the minimum force, every soldier is expected to adhere to fire discipline. There should be no indiscriminate firing. It should be controlled by commanders at all levels and fire must be brought down on specific targets rather than resorting to speculative firing. Lastly, the security forces must be judicious and discreet in the use of mines. In Cambodia, one in 236 people had to be amputated and there were 70,000 casualties due to mines in Angola. This figure would be exceeded in Afghanistan. Therefore, while laying of mines along the borders to deny routes of infiltration may become imperative, these must be properly recorded and marked.

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Unlawful Detention

The civil law lays down that every militant who is apprehended by the security forces is required to be handed over to the civil police within 24 hours. There may be problems faced by the security forces due to constraints of distance/terrain imperatives, the endeavour should be to meet this legal obligation at the earliest. The tendency to detain an apprehended militant for the purpose of interrogation and obtaining information beyond the stipulated period must be curbed.

Having highlighted some salient aspects of the human rights laws as they pertain to counter insurgency operations, it needs no emphasis that the security forces must remember that while there is increasing awareness and consciousness of the civil destruction by modern conflicts, they must avoid violation of human rights. They must be transparent in their actions as far as possible. And lastly, they should undertake socio-economic development programmes to provide the healing touch so as to assuage the feelings of the common people. In this context, opening of civil liaison cells and frequent meetings by commanders at brigade and above, with various sections of the local population (particularly the senior citizens) would help in establishing a good rapport with the local population.

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9

Psychological Operations and Media Management

There has been a mass proliferation in media channels of communications exposing the nation at large and the army in particular to sustained anti-India/army and subversive propaganda by a large number of religious, ethnic, communal and foreign aided/abetted organisations. This false propaganda is used to blow up minor and even imaginary cases of human rights violations. The volume and intensity of such subversive propaganda has serious ramifications particularly for the troops engaged in counter insurgency operations, whether in the North East or J&K. Unless a well directed psychological warfare and media management programme is formulated to counter such propaganda, it is likely to turn half truths or belated lies into credible propaganda resulting in eroding the fine image of the army and casting a shadow on its achievements.

Regrettably, there is no agency at present at the national level to deal with the subject. The DPR (defence press organisation) is considered inadequate to fulfil this vital role. The army, therefore, appears to be fending for itself as the army too has no sanctioned establishment. It has created an ad hoc organisation in the form of an "Army Liaison Cell" at

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Army Headquarters by merging sections from the Military Operations and the Military Intelligence Directorates with corresponding organisations at the subordinate formations in the chain of command. No separate organisation has been sanctioned as yet and manpower/equipment is pooled by restructuring/offsetting the existing establishment.

Since the country is likely to continue facing the proxy war and the army is engaged in such low intensity conflicts, there is a need to address this vital issue at the national level by evolving a national policy on psychological operations and media management and consequently have an organisation for its implementation.

Before recommending such a policy and an organisation, let us examine the *modus operandi* adopted by the supporters/ perpetrators of the proxy war and the measures the government should take to neutralise/minimize such propaganda.

Targets

The targets of the psychological campaign are:

(a) The local population (for example, Kashmiris in J&K).
(b) The other citizens of India.
(c) The security forces.
(d) The international community.

Means of Propaganda

The information is propagated through all types of media like,radio, TV, video tapes and print (newspapers/magazines, posters, and leaflets).

Themes

These are worked out separately keeping the audience in view. For example, for J&K, the theme of the supporters of the proxy war would be based on the following lines:

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(a) The Kashmiris would be told about the economic/social deprivations by the rest of India and espouse their cause for freedom.

(b) Convince the rest of the citizens of India that Kashmir is in illegal possession and our presence in J&K is not justified.

(c) Confuse the security forces with regard to the cause for which they are fighting.

(d) Win the sympathy of the international community for the struggle for independence by the people of Kashmir.

Besides the false propaganda by the hostile country, the militants themselves control the local media to convince the local population regarding the righteousness of the cause and alienate them from the security forces as well as the rest of the country. They adopt the following strategy:

(a) Intimidation and subversion of the local media to force it to publish pro-militant news.

(b) Make false allegations of rape, looting and killings by the security forces to propagate human rights violations.

(c) Highlight achievements (success in operations against the security forces and extending any assistance to the locals).

(d) Distort history.

(e) Uphold and implement their religious values.

(f) Win sympathy and support of the international community.

Concept of Psychological Operations and Media Management

Keeping in view the threat of adverse propaganda by the militants and the countries supporting/abetting such

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organisations, the concept of psychological operations and media management would include:

(a) For successful conduct of offensive and defensive psychological operations, a close interaction with media at national as well as regional (state) level is imperative.

(b) One nodal organisation/agency should be responsible for handling national print and electronic media at the national level. A similar organisation should function at the state/regional level.

(c) Need for a close interaction between the army and the nodal agencies at the national and regional level.

Targets

The targets of our psychological operations should be the following:

(a) The international community particularly those nations which voice their concern on the issue.

(b) The country (countries) which support (s) /abets the militant organisations.

(c) The people of the states affected by the insurgency.

(d) The rest of the citizens of India.

(e) The security forces.

(f) The militants

Theme

(a) The international community should be apprised about the real/true facts of the issue. In this context, visits by the heads of missions/military advisers and journalists to affected areas as also their periodical briefings will help in better understanding of the

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country's point of view. Emphasis should be laid to counter the hostile country's and the militant's false propaganda, particularly on the issue of human rights violations.

(b) The people/government of the hostile country must be dissuaded from interfering in the internal matters of our country.

(c) Project the army as an organisation that helps the civil administration in the maintenance of law and order and in implementing development projects. In this context, the army's efforts in undertaking people friendly operations to ensure that the civil population, particularly women and children are not put to any inconvenience, are widely publicized. Protect the local population from the propaganda of the militants and unfriendly countries. Programmes to highlight the misdeeds of the militants, like killings,torture, rape, kidnappings and extortion so as to isolate them from the local population.

(d) Immunise our troops by educating, informing and motivating them to observe high standards of discipline of the army and in respecting laws on human rights. Convince the soldier of the just and legitimate cause that he is fighting for. Protecting forces against hostile propaganda by militants and unfriendly countries.

(e) Convince the militants that they are fighting for an unjust and illegitimate cause and the unfriendly country is using them as pawns in their power game. Induce them to give up arms and join the mainstream through offers of amnesty and cash rewards.

The treatment desired for each target will be different and will by and large be based on their religious and ethnic

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background, sentiments and sensitivities based on the socio-economic environment obtaining in a particular insurgency affected area. Therefore, there can be no fixed template which can be uniformly applied for all the targets. The treatment will also vary from situation to situation and the means of communicating (agencies) will differ with each target to obtain the desired results. Therefore, careful and imaginative selection of themes and agencies of communication are required.

Organisation for Psychological Operations and Media Management

As mentioned earlier, there is a need to evolve an organisation at the national/regional levels corresponding with the heirarchial system of the army for better coordination and interface. The organisation should be a dedicated team of experts on psychological warfare, TV/radio correspondents with video cameras/cameras, experts in regional/foreign languages and represented by bureaucrats from the ministries of External Affairs, Defence, Home and Information and Broadcasting. It should function directly under the ministry of Home Affairs.

The Army Liaison Cell and the Human Rights Cell with respective complements in full should be co-opted to work in close co-operation with the above organisation.

Media Management in Counter Insurgency Operations

The US involvement in Vietnam in 1956, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1989, the war against Iraq by the multinational forces and more recently, the Kargil conflict have highlighted that information is power in this information age. Media, which is the main source of information can thus be a potent force multiplier as it moulds national and international opinions. This is particularly

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significant in the context of the proxy war, as this does not leave the civilian population untouched. Human rights violations, civilian casualties, destruction or commandeering property, refugee movement,disruption of infrastructure and livelihood must be expected.

While in general war, where the country is fighting for its survival, the media are clearly much more likely to support its armed forces, but in counter insurgency operations/proxy war, where the national interest is less evident and issues are less focused, media reporting is likely to be based on different religious, moral and political perceptions. For example, the induction of the IPKF in Sri Lanka and the Indian contribution to UN missions have been construed as fighting for unjust peace and rendering undeserved humanitarian aid respectively.

The Kargil conflict has proved beyond doubt that while the media persons lack training in military affairs and war reporting, armed forces lacked training and preparedness to facilitate the task of the media and counter information. There is therefore, a compelling need for them to carry out serious introspection to understand each other's characteristics. Then only will they be able to function as partners in the same enterprise.

The salient features of the media are:

1. Media is not entirely free. It is under the influence of some agency or the other. In an insurgency environment it is generally the voice of the militants because of the fear of the gun. It tends to blow up even small lapses in human rights violations, but conveniently exonerates and ignores even serious atrocities by the militants. The reporting therefore gets biased.
2. Media is neither neutral nor impartial. It can be used for propaganda by any of the agencies, the militants or the armed forces.

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3. Media is very strong and can reach even the remotest place. Its neglect can therefore be dangerous.
4. TV depends upon live pictures, and not briefings. Live pictures are not easy due to danger to life during conflict.
5. The quality of reporting by the media is generally shallower because of the limited time available to the reporter to get his scoop in time. Besides, diversification of media reporting leads to a hazy picture rather than synergy.
6. Media can be manipulated for operational reasons as was done in the Iraq war. After all, the journalists do not have independent means to verify and are more unlikely to have access to tactical details.
7. Journalists are more independent because they have their own discrete communications for reporting.
8. Journalists get influenced by individual perceptions, thus clouding objective reporting.
9. Media tends to glorify violence.
10. It is misguided to view the media as a single, homogenous grouping of journalists and broadcasters, who act in a predictable manner or uniform way. The media are neither monolithic nor homogenous. They are a diverse, highly competitive, unpredictable lot. Except in most catastrophic events (air crashes, earthquakes, floods with high levels of instant death or a political upheaval), there is a predictable approach to a uniform, international news response. But treatment of stories in war/conflict will vary according to national and regional agendas.

As far as the armed forces are concerned:

1. The armed forces are a puzzle for the media which they do not understand.

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2. The military commanders are generally shy of the media. They are not trained to say what they do say and get worried about making wrong statements. They, therefore, adopt the easy way out of avoiding the media, amounting to ignorance of its ways.
3. The relationship between the media and the armed forces in time of conflict has never been one of the easiest associations. The military would wish to conduct their operations in the manner that offers the very best conditions of security for themselves, their equipment and their aims. The media on the other hand considers that they have a duty to inform the public of events as and when they unfold with no restrictions imposed upon them. On the surface these two views are diametrically opposite views and have little chance of any mutual conciliation. The relations are, therefore, anywhere near perfect, far from it. An antagonism exists on both sides and there is a lot of distrust and suspicion.
4. The relationship between the media and the armed forces is not well defined while they are mutually dependent.
5. Proliferation of communication for the media has led to a greater number of correspondents covering each conflict precipitating even greater control for the armed forces.

As per the content of the aforementioned, the media and the armed forces must view each other with trust as entities who have similar, but not identical objectives. Tolerance and understanding is required on both sides. They must understand that they are mutually dependent and, therefore, work as complementary to each other.

The media must be as honest, neutral and impartial as possible without being influenced by either the militants or

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the armed forces. In other words, it must desist manipulation. The media persons must appreciate the limitations of the armed forces in not being able to expose them to the dangers and risk their lives by taking them dangerously close to the place of fighting. While the media depends more on the pictures, it must learn to make better assessment of the briefings by the armed forces. The media must support the actions of the government and its armed forces in an insurgency environment like they do for general war. Adverse coverage and commments by the media could lead to demoralisation of the armed forces especially when even insignificant events are blown out of proportion. This calls for a better understanding of the views of the government and the limitations under which the armed forces are fighting in an insurgency environment, against their own nationals who have taken to arms. Lastly, the role of the media is not to question the rights and wrongs of the war, but give a fair representation of the reality.

The armed forces on their part:

1. Must not feel shy of handling the media and, therefore, allow minimum restrictions imposed on media personnel.
2. Must learn to live with the media and their journalists must be included in the operational planning.
3. Train their officers, beginning at the military academy and during various courses of all arms/services to handle the media and learn to live with the pressures it brings on them.
4. Give the correct picture to the media and facts should not be hidden as these tend to surface in any case.

The relationship between the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the media during peacetime if neglected, the same relationship gets transfered during war. The DPR (Defence

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Public Relation Office) at the MoD and at the regional command headquarters of the army are not adequately staffed and equipped to handle the media, though some efforts have been made by the army, by establishing a separate media managment cell headed by a brigadier under the Director General of Military Intelligence. But this is totally inadequate to meet the growing demands of the lower field formations to handle the media at their levels. It is, therefore, time that serious thought is given to this vital aspect and the whole system of media managment is given due attention.

It is also time for the armed forces and the media to get together at seminars organised by the army for a better understanding of each other and developing a healthy relationship.

Till such time the system gets organised, army officers are well advised to follow the do's and dont's laid down by the British Army and taught during the predeployment training.

British Army Pre-deployment Training

Do's

- Always be polite.
- Always report press presence.
- Talk only about matters of fact within your area of responsibility.
- Refer all other questions to the PRO.
- Think before you speak.
- Try to be helpful.
- Be honest, positive, professional and remain calm.

Dont's

- Give any interviews without prior clearance from PRO
- Discuss operations, plans and procedures.

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- Give any information about local forces which might be of use to the opponents.
- Your thought and opinion are your own, never give them to the media.
- Mislead or take sides.
- Let the media pressurise you into saying things you would better not say or discuss.
- Carry the press in the vehicle unless authorised.

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10

Management of Stress in Counter-Insurgency Environment

The media seems to be unnecessarily highlighting stray incidents of some army officers at the middle level committing suicide and soldiers running amok, shooting at their superiors/ colleagues. Such incidents though not an unusual phenomenon in an insurgency environment could be symptoms of a serious malady that may be plaguing the troops engaged in counter insurgency operations. Notwithstanding the fact that the Indian Army is unique and the 'jawans' are capable of withstanding the pressures of counter insurgency operations unlike the US troops in Vietnam and the Russians in Afghanistan, for tenures extending more than two years. Such incidents are a consequence of stress due to prolonged exposure to an insurgency environment. It is, therefore, axiomatic that leaders at all levels understand the nature of this serious malady and create an environment which helps in the successful management of stress.

It is proposed to highlight the nature of stress, its causes and successful management in an insurgency environment.

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Cause of Stress

It must be realised that prolonged exposure to an insurgency environment makes everyone, whether officers or soldiers, susceptible to stress because they not only live, but also work at a faster pace to deal with uncertainty and change. From the military point of view, insurgency places a psychological weight on the military mind. Counter-insurgency operations, whether winning or losing, are an uphill and heartbreaking task. The battlefield appears frozen in time. One is running all the time, yet it appears that one is standing at the same place. The levels of friction particularly of the mind can at times be intolerable. The operations are continuous; there are no pauses and no time-outs or half-times. Frustration mounts when there is no breakthrough while the expectations to perform and produce results are high. The soldiers are caught in a crossfire—moral vs immoral —and the dividing lines are blurred. In sum, insurgency imposes severe stress and strain on those who are engaged in it. Such feelings of stress and strain are generally described as:

"Feeling of tenseness"
"Being in pressure situation".
"Being anxious or frustrated".

There is a need to understand the true nature of stress. Contrary to belief, stress is not pressure from outside situations commonly known as "stressors", but responding to situations constitutes stress resulting in emotions like anger, anxiety and frustration. Stress begins with being anxious because of the workload. This causes anxiety which leads to tension. This tension triggers nervous impulses that cause physical changes in the body. And when tension reaches a point that it affects the body, people are under stress.

Relating this to counter-insurgency operations, let us discuss the stressors in an insurgency environment and how the response to these stressors cause stress.

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(a) As is well-known, units operating in an insurgency area are assigned the task of killing or apprehending maximum number of militants and recovering maximum weapons and other warlike stores. It is purely a numbers game which becomes the criteria for assessing the performance of units and individuals. Even unit citations are awarded on this basis. Obviously, there is a race or competition between units and formations. In this game of one—upmanship, units with less scores to their credit led by ambitious commanding officers are driven hard resulting in an overall atmosphere of tension prevailing in the minds of the men. In units, where there is lack of cohesiveness, the results could be unpleasant. In the same context, when operations are launched based on hearsay or mere speculation, such operations, when prolonged and continuous without yielding results also lead to frustration especially on account of irregular meal timings and deprivation of rest and sleep.

(b) The next factor relates to the response to the casualties suffered by troops during encounters with the militants. It is generally seen that while casualties inflicted on the militants are a cause for jubilation and celebrations, response to casualties of own troops is different. In fact, senior officers tend to add to the agony of a unit suffering casualties by instituting inquiries of such incidents. As it is, the soldier is already under tension and stress with regard to his own survival, inquiries of this nature further compound the problem.

(c) Another issue that disturbs the minds of the men and officers equally is the confusion over the cause for which they are fighting. While in conventional warfare it is easy to identify the enemy and the cause of defending the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country, there is always a lurking doubt about

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the righteousness of the cause in an insurgency environment because the fight is with one's own countrymen notwithstanding the fact that they have taken up arms against the legitimate government. This problem was apparent even when troops were operating as part of the IPKF in Sri Lanka.

(d) There is also the dilemma of using minimum force and shooting to prevent killing innocent people. While the soldiers are trained to shoot to kill, in counter-insurgency operations, they are expected to exercise restraint in the use of fire power and force, fighting with one hand tied behind the back. In most situations, therefore, the militants take advantage of such restraint by troops leading to a conflict regarding the morality or the immorality of such a restraint.

(e) The soldier's mind is also under constant tension because of the qualitative edge that the militants have in weapons. While they are equipped with 7.62mm caliber weapons, the militants generally carry AK 47/ 5.56 mm rifles which are automatic with better rates of fire. This places our men in a disadvantageous position particularly when the encounters are sudden and at close ranges. Notwithstanding the few AK 47 rifles and bullet proof jackets issued to the units, the soldier feels that his superiors have failed to provide him with a level playing ground with the militants. He feels frustrated at this inadequacy and responds with anger when under pressure.

(f) Coupled with the above are the poor conditions of habitat under adverse weather conditions which result in a sense of frustration and anger with consequent disgust towards the superiors for their inability to provide proper living conditions. The frustration may either result in disobedience of orders or lead to tension.

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Stress Management

The response to the factors discussed above manifests itself in the form of anger, frustration or tension with cumulative effect to stress leading to either suicides or soldiers running amok. While good discipline, training, sound administration and above all able leadership help the soldiers to negate the stress factors, any dilution in these virtues will adversely affect the motivation and morale of the soldiers. It is therefore incumbent on all military leaders especially at the senior level to watch for the symptoms of stress developing in individuals and units and take remedial measures. Since it is a warfare where execution is decentralised, the impact or influence of senior commanders (brigade commanders and above) is less as their orders take time to reach the subordinate commanders at the execution level. Therefore, the main burden of motivating the soldiers and sustaining their morale devolves on the commanding officer and his team of officers and JCOs. Some suggestions to improve troop morale are offered in subsequent paragraphs.

Leadership

Good leadership and training are the real antidote for combating stress in a counter-insurgency environment. The majority of the counter-insurgency operations are fought at platoon and company levels. Hence platoon and company commanders must plan and execute missions by leading from the front and by setting personal example. The leaders above company commander level also need to be seen and their presence felt by the rank and file. A soldier must see commanders as often as possible. The commanding officer should be seen once in two or three days if not daily and the brigade commander once a week if not more often. Commanders must be able to plan ahead and defeat the designs of militants by being pro-active. The troops should

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develop confidence in the professional abilities of their commanders. When the troops move out for operations they must be convinced that the operations they are involved in have been planned and ordered after due deliberations and all assistance for their success provided. During execution of operations, the men must see their commanders facing the same hardship and danger to life as being faced by them. The living conditions of all ranks should be as similar as possible, (Rana Pratap and his family lived the same life as was led by his men). Such leadership, if practiced, would generate a state of motivation in troops which would negate all the stress of the battlefield.

Training

To kill is not the natural behaviour of a human being. To create the killing instinct in a soldier, he should be trained hard and realistically. Such training would inculcate body reaction and develop in him a second nature whereby he would do the unnatural act more as an auto-reaction leading to success. Success in combat would generate confidence and a sense of superiority which is essential to combat stress. If men are trained for all possible tasks and situations, the stress of battlefield would reduce to a negligible level.

Numbers Game

While the task assigned involves numbers game, there is no need to be obsessed with it and consequently drive the men to the stage of exhaustion or "burnout". Efforts should be made to create a good intelligence network at the tactical level and carry out operations based on specific information. This will yield good results as opposed to pursuing the course of searching for a needle in a haystack. Besides, it will save the troops the frustration of chasing the unseen and unknown.

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Casualties

The troops are engaged in a live conflict. Therefore, if they inflict casualties on the militants, it is obvious that they too will suffer some casualties. While there should be concern for the safety of our men, excessive fear of losing them would make them defensive. Therefore, to imbibe an aggressive spirit in the men, they should be mentally prepared to sustain casualties.

Cause

There is no need to debate the wisdom (or lack of it) of the political leadership. For soldiers the task is quite clear. The militants who have taken up arms and recourse to violence against the legitimate government are anti-national and, therefore, need to be treated as adversaries. It must be emphasised that the elimination of such anti-nationals is cause enough for the soldiers to fight.

Use of Minimum Force

Our troops must respond with force and manpower necessary to deal with the militants in a given situation without placing themselves at a disadvantage. The commander on the spot is the best judge to decide on the quantum of force and firepower to be used and the higher commanders must give due weightage to the wisdom of his judgment. They should also avoid instituting inquiries as such actions demoralise leaders at the junior levels inhibiting them in taking initiative and risks in future.

Weapons and Equipment

Recognising the fact that the militants are equipped with better small calibre weapons, the strength of our troops lies in better training to use weapons and also the ground

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effectively. This qualitative edge must be fully exploited to deter the militants engaging troops in combat.

Habitat

There is no excuse for poor habitat for troops. As Napoleon had said "Treat your men like horses. Drive them hard when they are out of barracks and groom them well when they are back in the stable". The men must be provided with adequate shelter, proper clothing and good food. There cannot be any compromise on sound administration.

Rest and Recreation Centers

This is a concept which was successfully tried out in Sri Lanka. A rest and recreation centre was established by the division where units came in rotation for two to three weeks. This period was devoted by men to maintain their weapons and equipment, for personal administration and recreation making them fresh for undertaking operations for another six months to one year.

Leave

There is a tendency to curb leave during counter-insurgency commitment. While restricting leave may be justified, denial of leave to deserving cases could only add to the frustration of the men. Therefore, leave should be granted to troops when due.

Officer and Men Relationship

There is no substitute to the officers regularly interacting with their men. Provision of colour TVs and VCRs cannot be a substitute for this very important aspect. Officers must share the hardships and deprivation of their men. Senior officers

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should remain in constant touch with the units through regular visits to encourage and resolve their problems. With such close interaction, the officers committing suicide and soldiers running amok will reduce considerably.

A feedback on the behaviour and response of officers and men to various combat situations is given at Appendix 'C'. This research was carried out in Sri Lanka during the IPKF operations.

Conclusion

It needs no emphasis that the nature of insurgency places a special demand on officers and men leading to tension and stress. The management of stress, therefore, becomes an important function of command in counter-insurgency operations.

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11

Trends in Insurgency and Terrorism

The attraction for various renegade regimes to use militant groups as surrogate warriors has shown an upward trend since the 1991 Gulf War. The lesson of Iraq's overt war with Kuwait where a UN backed multinational coalition was almost immediately arrayed against Saddam suggests that further aggressors may prefer to accomplish their objectives clandestinely with a handful of militants. This has become particularly relevant in the event of near impossibility of a nuclear war and conventional wars being unaffordable. As an easier option, therefore, militant groups could facilitate the destabilization of neighbouring or rival states which otherwise are more powerful. If done covertly and successfully, the state sponsor might escape identification, retaliation and sanctions, from the UN or other powerful nations. The militants may in future come to be regarded by the rogue states as an ultimate clandestine, cost effective means used to wage wars covertly against more powerful rivals or to subvert neighbouring hostile regimes. An excellant example is the proxy war unleashed by Pakistan against India by providing active support to the militant groups operating in Kashmir. The militants are not only being trained and equipped, but also provided assistance and guidance in executing their tasks.

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The intrusion in Dras-Kargil sector was carried out by the militants with full support of the Pakistan regulars.

The overall increase in militancy/terrorism during the past 15 years indicates the backing of religious fundamentalists. While the cause of insurgency may be political, social or ethnic, these fundmentalists give the impression of their religion being in danger. This is particulary so with the Shia Islamic belt comprising Pakistan, the Arab states, Iran, Iraq, Sudan and Syria. The growth in religiously backed militant/ terrorist groups vis-a-vis the total number of terrorist groups is shown below:

	1968	1980	1992	1994	1995	1996
Total Terrorist Groups	11	64	48	49	56	46
Religious Backed Groups	–	2	11	16	27	13

The religious tenor given to the cause has, therefore, drawn militants from all over the world fighting together in the name of 'jehad'. The Kashmiri militants have the support of militants drawn from Pakistan, Iran, Syria, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia and so on. These countries are not only providing the fighting cadres, but also give full financial aid to sustain these militant groups.

The militant groups appear to be undertaking deliberate cleansing operations to force people belonging to other groups to flee their homes, thereby changing the demographic pattern in favour of Muslims. Accordingly, majority of Hindus and some Sikh families had to seek refuge outside J&K.

The trend has been to employ more and more terrorist tactics in their operations. These terrorist attacks are dramatic and violent which draw the attention of the international community. The killing of 35 innocent Sikhs on the eve of President Bill Clinton's visit to India, the hijacking of the Indian Airlines airbus to Kandahar and the massacre of

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Amarnath *yatris* are incidents which cannot be ignored by the outside world. The most recent examples of such horrondous attacks are the September 11, 2001 attacks on the Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre at New York and December 13, 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament, New Delhi.

The militants seem to be better motivated and the trend to employ suicide squads for attacks on army/border security camps in the recent past is evidence of the extremism displayed by militant groups in the name of religion.

There has been a proliferation of amateurs taking part in militant attacks. Earlier, the militants were trained through training camps, but today the means and methods of terrorism can be easily obtained from book stores, mail order publications, CD-Rom over internet and so on. It is well known that most of the LTTE cadres were trained by showing films on the Vietnam war.

Trends in Terrorism

Though the total volume of terrorist incidents worldwide has declined in the 90s; the percentage of terrorist incidents resulting in fatalities has nonetheless grown.

In the past, terrorism was practised by a collection of individuals belonging to an indentifiable organisation that had a clear command and control apparatus and a defined set of political, social or economic objectives (Red Army in Japan, Germany, Red Brigade in Italy, the Irish Republican Army (IRA).

Today the more traditional and familiar types of nationalist/ethnic and separatist as well as ideological groups have been joined by a variety of organisations with less comprehensible nationalist or ideological motivations. These new terrorist organisations embrace far more amorphous

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religious and millinarian aims and wrap themselves in less cohesive organisational entities with a more diffuse structure and membership. However, paucity of activities did not show concomitant decline in fatal casualties.

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
No of terrorist attacks	484	343	360	356	278	250
No of %killed (14% incidents)	–	17.5%	24%	27%	29%	24%

Why this increase in lethalities ?

(a) There appears to be a pattern that suggests that at least some terrorists have come to believe that attention is no longer as easily obtained as it once was. To their minds, both the public and the media have become increasingly inured or desensitised to the continuing spiral of terrorist violence. Therefore, they are pushed to undertake even more dramatic or destructively lethal deeds today in order to achieve the same effect that a less amibitious and bloody action may have had in the past. (Nerve gas attack in Tokyo, New York World Trade Centre, 1993).

(b) Terrorists have gained experience and have become more adept at killings (smaller weapons, more sophisticated and deadlier); better access to such weapons through rogue states.

(c) Thirdly, is the active support provided by states in supporting and sponsoring terrorism (countries such as Cuba, Libya, Iran, Iraq, N. Korea, Sudan, Syria and Pakistan). Assistance has provided/enhanced the striking power and capabilities of these terrorist organisations-transformations like elite commando units.

(d) The sophistication and operational competence of professional terrorists are increasing. These professionals

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are becoming demonstrably more adept in their tradecraft of death and destruction, more formidable in the capacity for tactical modification, innovation in their methods of attacks. These professionals can easily be hired as mercenaries as is being done in J&K.

(e) The terrorists of today have the benefit of experience gained in Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and so on.

(f) Finally, terrorists tend to claim credit for their attacks less frequently.

Future Scenario

The proliferation in Information Technology (IT) and acquistion of missile material through clandestine means are likely to make the terrorist organisations more deadly in the foreseable future. Their indulgence in the following types of operations is a reality.

Indulge in cyber war to sabotage, disrupt/destroy the network, command and control set up, Intelligence network and fire control systems.

Extensive use of plastic explosives, hand-held precision guided munitions and surface-to-air missiles against airforce and civilian aircraft.

Suitcase bombs made through the use of fissile material could be employed to blackmail the government into accepting their demands and as a last resort used to detroy vital installations/cities.

After the September 11, attack on the Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre, New York and the war in Afghanistan to ouster the Al Qaida and the Taliban by the USA and its allies, the world has awakened the dangers of Terrorism. There is therefore a united approach to fight this menace.

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Notes

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Recommendations

After reading the book no doubt the reader will be convinced that in view of the aforementioned facts there is a strong case for review of organisations in India, doctrines and equipment for successfully combating insurgency. This is particularly relevant in the light of the country going nuclear as the nuclear status will not only deter a nuclear war, but also a conventional war. In such a scenario, proxy war by supporting an insurgency by our adversaries is a stark reality in the future. It is, therefore expedient that the nation prepares itself for the type of warfare which is more likely to take place.

A few suggestions on this important aspect are discussed below.

Re-structuring/Re-organisation

1. *Strategic/National Level*

Insurgency is the result of socio-economic neglect of the people of a particular region/state who get alienated from the rest of the country. There could be other causes attributed to political aspirations/ideology of the people or on grounds of separate ethnic/tribal/religious identity. When alienated for various reasons people take to arms as a last resort. The

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government, therefore, has to ascertain the real causes of insurgency and take concrete steps at the political level to find a solution. The problem cannot be wished away for an indefinite period with the hope that it will get resolved with the passage of time. Alternately, employ military might and supress the wishes of the people. Maybe the army will and has been able to contain such insurgency both in the NE region, Punjab and now in J&K. But it is time that concrete political steps are taken to resolve these problems. Temporary truce/ceasefire being entered from time to time are no solution to the issues.

Till such time and that should not be for long, that a political settlement of the problem is reached, the army should be used as little as possible. The present trend to increasingly rely on the army and involving it more and more must discontinue. It is time to initially reduce and then finally release the army from this commitment. The use of the army is most expensive and has adverse effect on its training, operational preparedness and morale. It is high time that the para military forces and central police/state police organisations are rejuvenated by providing them with the necessary weapons, equipment, communications and mobility and thereafter, train them for this task so as to enable them in handling the internal situation with the support of the army. Only when necessitated by a particular situation, the army is the last hope of the government and it must be conserved for fighting a conventional/nuclear war. It must not be forgotten that two of the best armies in the world, the US Army and the Soviet Army had to beat a retreat in Vietnam and Afghanistan respectively, when they were engaged in an unconventional war. The Indian Army holding out and acquitting itself with glory despite such prolonged commitment is worthy of praise and credit. But the men joining the ranks are not the same and gradually the

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standards of physical fitness to withstand rigours of such conflict are on the decline. How long will the Indian Army continue to perform so well under such adverse conditions, only time will tell. Let the political leadership not close down the shutters to this stark reality and be averse to the likely consequences of the Indian Army's inability to perform at this level.

2. *Coordination Committee*

There is a need to constitute a coordination committee with representatives from various ministries concerned (Foreign, Home, Defence, Information, Broadcasting and so on) under the Ministry of Home Affairs which formulates the policy (political aim and action plan/strategy) at the national level for reacting to the situation in a particular region/state. The organisation for psychological operations and media management as also the human rights cell should function directly under the coordination committee.

3. *State Level*

This aspect has been discussed at various forums and even highlighted by authors of different books on the subject. The need for a joint planning committee under the chairmanship of the governor/chief minister cannot be overemphasized. This should be based on the principles of "unity of effort" at every stage and the law and order aspect should be integrated.

4. *Intelligence*

The Kargil committee report has highlighted grave inadequacies in our intelligence set up and made some very useful recommendations like upgrading the surveillance system, communication, intelligence and setting up of an integrated defence intelligence agency. Our intelligence

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organisation has to be alive to the threat to our cyber network and the possibility of the militants using the fissile material as also the surface-to-air missiles. The introduction of surface-to-air missiles can alter the equation in the field, as it had done in Afghanistan against the Soviet aircraft/helicopter gunships.

5. *Crisis Management Group*

The army and the airforce hierarchy needs to be co-opted in the crisis management groups at the national/state levels. For incidents like hijacking of an aircraft there would be a requirement to place specially trained troops in anti-hijacking operations under its operational command. There is also a need to co-opt some language interpreters and trained negotiators from the Ministry of External Affairs in this organisation.

6. *Psychological Operations and Media Management*

An organisation to carry out propaganda/psychological operations and counter the militants propaganda needs to be set up with components to manage the media in conjunction with the army/para military forces.

7. *Multifarious Forces*

Besides the army there are several types of para military forces and central police organisations. Multifarious forces pose serious problems of coordination and command/control. There is a need for rationalisation of these forces into one grouping called the "Internal Security Forces". These forces would be assigned the task of guarding/manning the borders and with some modifications used for counter insurgency operations/other tasks when employed along the borders during war or for counter insurgency operations they would come under operational control of the army.

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Restructuring/Reorganistion in the Army

1. *Intelligence Organisation*

Reorganisation of the intelligence set up to be given top priority. In addition to the authorisation of an Intelligence battalion at divisional level brought out in chapter 4, it should also cater for the 'recce' element within the Infantry division/ brigade/battalion. The recce troops were profitably employed by the Soviets in Afghanistan and the usefulness of such elements has been amply demonstrated in the book "Combat Tactics in Afghanistan".

2. *Battalion Level*

The infantry battalion needs better mobility and more responsive communication set up which will provide flexibility to the battalion, so vital in counter insurgency operations. While reducing the number of 3 ton vehicles, more jeeps/jongas and 1 ton vehicles should be authorised. The reliance on telephone lines using cable is to be reduced and better systems, like what LTTE had in Sri Lanka be introduced.

3. *Heli-lift Capability*

Helicopters played a key role in landing "Airborne/Air Assault' troops in the vicinity of an objective in Afghanistan. These troops were thus successful in moving fast over difficult and arduous mountainous terrain to block or destroy the 'mujahideens'. Regrettably, due to resource constraints, the Indian Army is deprived of such a capability. There is a need to provide a minimum of two company heli-lift at a time at divisional level.

4. *MI.17 Helicopters*

The mobile gunship in the form of armed helicopters was most dreaded by the mujahideens in Afghanistan. These

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helicopters also played a vital role in the fight against the LTTE in Sri Lanka. Their employment in remote areas, away from the population centres can be very decisive in certain situations, they can also be used for the escort and protection of convoys/trains.

5. *Equipment*

- *Direction Finding Equipment.* The troops should be equipped with hand held direction finding equipment so that they can home on to the bases/hide-outs of the insurgents.
- *Mine Detection Equipment.* Authorisation of mine detection equipment, particularly of plastic type or improvised explosive devices can contribute to saving of a large number of casualties.

6. *Weapons*

The soldier must be equipped with weapons which are compatible if not better than those possessed by militants.

7. *Review of Doctrines/Combat Tactics*

The Indian Army cannot successfully fight the present day conflict when the militants are equipped with modern weapons/latest technology equipment. This calls for a review of our age old doctrines and combat tactics.

8. *Military Doctrine*

Need for review of the military doctrine. Military aim, strategy and concept of operations depending upon the area of deployment.

9. *Management of Stress*

The following is recommended:

- A team of psychologists for selective psychological screening of personnel earmarked for low intensity

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conflict to weed out those with known habit of drug abuse, alchohol dependency/addiction, depression and signs of aggressiveness (those in the habit of frequent quarrels, assault and affray).

- Therepy sessions by experts in rest and recreation centres for relaxation which help in psychological requirements of troops pulled out from the field.
- Greater emphasis on religious needs and fostering a clean officerman relationship.
- Fair and impartial recommendations for promotions and leave

Human Rights Violations

Impart training to the troops being inducted for counter insurgency operations and educate them with regard to the laws relating to Human Rights as also the consequences of violating them. Stress on restraint and use of minimum force.

Legal Aspects

Need to amend our laws to allow adequate legal protection to the armed forces, provision to detain an apprehended person for over 24 hours and permit the armed forces to extract actionable information (without physical torture). Lastly, the armed forces should be permitted to carry out search operations without the presence of police personnel or a magistrate.

Cyber Laws

Legislate strict cyber laws and a surfing agency to ensure that the electronic media is not misused by the militants as has become evident from the interrogation of the militants who were responsible for the shootout in the Red Fort, Delhi.

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Embroilment in Kashmir and Its Resolution

SKETCH 'Q'—MAP SHOWING JAMMU AND KASHMIR WITH ITS BORDER AREAS

Introduction

The insurgency in Kashmir which surfaced in December 1989/90 is still going on unabated. A large number of security forces are actively engaged in its containment. While the government often claims that it has got over the hump, the militants strike sudden terror to carry to the rest of the world the message that the problem is far from over.

The government has taken the bold initiative of declaring a unilateral ceasefire in the hope that it will create the necessary atmosphere to move further towards holding negotiations. Though the initial ceasefire was only for a month, but it was extended by another month, up to January 26, 2001. Finally, it was extended further by another four months, practically giving the warring factions a period of six months to make any meaningful progress towards a negotiated settlement.

Though the unilateral ceasefire has been welcomed by the people of J&K and even the international community, but the response from Pakistan and the militants has not

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been encouraging. While Pakistan has called for a halt to the firing along the borders, the militants have declared to honour the ceasefire. The ceasefire set into motion a lot of activities, both in India and Pakistan. Some of the activities included exchange of visits of retired diplomats and generals with a view to explore possibilities of initiating talks between India and Pakistan. But India's insistence on Pakistan stopping cross-border terrorism and not violating the line of control as a precondition to holding talks has created a stalemate. Apparently, the problem is still alive and could continue.

It is, therefore, the right time to carry out an introspection, analyse the situation in detail, and examine possible options so as to arrive at a likely course of action towards resolving the Kashmir issue—rather than merely containing it.

Analysis of the Situation

With a view to arrive at certain conclusions based on which a possible solution could be suggested, it is important to analyse and critically examine the following variables as well as their relative importance that affect the fortunes of insurgency with specific reference to the situation in the Valley:

(a) Cause(s)
(b) Local Population
(c) Militants
(d) External Support
(e) Environment
(f) Government
(g) Security Forces

VARIABLES AFFECTING INSURGENCY IN J&K

Cause(s)

There appears to be no common consensus regarding the cause(s) of the insurgency in J&K. Different views are discussed below:

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Historically, the rulers of J&K have either been Hindus or Sikhs. The Kashmiri Muslims therefore, have grown up with a feeling of being subjugated and discriminated against. The partition of India in 1947 failed to meet their aspirations of being a Muslim state, independent or as part of Pakistan. Subsequently, it was the non-compliance of the UN resolution on referendum, both by Pakistan and India, that gave a final blow to the fulfilment of their dream. They lost all hopes in the political system and the problem was accentuated by the unholy alliance between the Congress and the National Conference and was precipitated by the large-scale rigging of the 1987 elections to the state assembly.

The gradual alienation of the Kashmiris over the last 50 years appears to be the underlying cause. Since the accession of Kashmir to India, the Kashmiris have developed a feeling of an oppressed community, both politically and economically, which started probably with Sheikh Abdullah's rule. Alienation is widespread and it is mainly linked to economic deprivation, but the factual position is entirely different. The per capita income in Kashmir is Rupees 4212. The annual budget for 1995-96 was four times that of Kerala with four times the population than that of Kashmir. The per capita household consumption is higher than the national average. Besides, special financial packages announced from time to time have only improved the financial health of the people. Unfortunately, there is rampant corruption. Only eight paise per rupee have been spent on development. So,while there is enough economic investment, the people feel deprived of its benefits, because of mismanagement of funds.

The other factor is the isolation of the Kashmiris from the rest of India due to geographical location of the Valley. With only one major land route (NH1A) passing through the Banihal Tunnel, the Kashmiris have not been able to

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mix freely and frequently with the other states, resulting in developing a peculiar culture of their own thereby insulating them from outside influence. (The Upshi-Manali road is a recent construction and open only for three months. It connects the Valley via Leh—a rather long and tenuous route). Coupled with these are the provisions of Article 370—which bestows special status akin to autonomy on the Kashmiris. The rhetoric by Sheikh Abdullah coupled with Article 370, about Kashmir being independent has raised the hopes of the Kashmiris for autonomy. Infact, I remember as early as 1963, when I was posted to the Valley, that the Kashmiris always identified themselves as a separate community from the rest of India (Hindustan). Whether this desire of autonomy has manifested itself in the demand for independence and\or accession to Pakistan is a moot point.

The third factor is religion. The majority of the Kashmiris are Muslims belonging to the Sunni sect except for a few Shias residing in the Kargil sector. The Jamaat-i-Islami exploited this religious diversity with the rest of India and propagated that the Hindu majority was out to destroy the Muslim minority. This thought process smacks of Muslim fundamentalism and the movement has been dubbed as an Islamic movement, but in reality, the majority of the people in the Valley practise 'Sufism'. In the *Dictionary of Islam*, Thomas P, Huges, writes "Sufism has arisen from the bosom of Muhammadinism, as a vague protest of the human soul, in its intense longing after a purer creed. On certain tenets of Quran, the sufis have erected their own system professing indeed to reassert its authority of divine revolution, but in reality substituting for it the oral voice of the teacher or the secret dreams of the mystic. Sufism appeals to human consciousness and seeks the power of selfless love than a gross Muhammadan paradise can fulfill". Sufism is not a revolt against the traditional theology, but a bold attempt at liberated

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thinking and mystic intepretation of Islam. Unlike the Muslim fundamentalists, the Sufis are great harbingers of inter-religious harmony. Sufism had bestowed upon the Kashmiri Muslims and Hindus a distinct ethnic profile known as 'Kashmiriyat'. But Pakistan drew a wedge between the Hindus and Muslims through the teachings in *madrassas* which coupled with the growth in Muslim fundamentalism across the world, led to the emergence of religious fundamentalism in the Valley and the loss of 'Kashmiriyat'.

Increased literacy, economic development and exposure to worldwide media resulted in political mobilization in the form of political awakening that is reflected in the citizens desire for political participation. The problem was further aggravated due to large-scale unemployment of the educated youth which led to frustration and anger against the government and hostility towards it.

Finally, support from Pakistan in the form of exploiting the situation and extending political, moral, financial and military assistance to the insurgents to realise their own dream of annexing Kashmir from India.

From the above mentioned, it is evident that there is not one, but a combination of several issues underlying the cause of unrest in Kashmir. It is also apparent that the majority of the people are not Muslim fundamentalists supporting the cause of the so-called Islamic movement. While opinions differ regarding accession to Pakistan/India or independence, the consensus points towards a general feeling of Kashmiris being a deprived or oppressed community resulting in a sense of alienation and cry for some sort of autonomy (independence). This urge for autonomy/independence has been fuelled by the Muslim fundamentalists deriving support from across the borders to project it as an Islamic movement.

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Local Population

Refer to the J&K map attached. Geographically, J&K is divided into three distinct regions, viz, Jammu region comprising areas of Jammu, Udhampur, Akhnur, Rajouri, Punch, Doda, Kistwar (area south of the Pir Panjal range); the Valley, hemmed in between the Great Himalayas in the north and the Pir Panjal ranges in the south and the Ladakh region which is north/NE of the Great Himalayas. Ethnically also, J&K has three distinct communities. The Jammu region comprises mainly the Hindus with some Muslim population centres in Punch and Doda. The Valley is predominantly Muslim (Sunni sect) with a few Kashmiri Pandits and the Ladakh region is largely inhabited by the Buddhists except Kargil region where the majority of the population is Muslim (Shia sect). The three ethnic groups have their distinct identities. It is the Muslim majority in the Valley with its spillovers in Punch and Doda that is the focus of the problems in J&K. This segment of the population has its deep-rooted connnections with the Muslims in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK). Their proximity and common religion gives them a common identity. Agriculture is the major occupation with some sections of the society depending upon Kashmiri handicrafts (carpets, walnut woodwork, embroidery, silk and shawls) and tourism (shikaras, houseboats and poneys). This has suffered during the last decade due to insurgency. Some of the people, (Gujjars) constitute the migratory population and thrive mainly on rearing sheep. The level of literacy is rather low. The Kashmiri society suffers from an acute though exaggerated need to belong and face a crisis of religious and ethnic identity, political insecurity and deep sense of personal deprivation. Corruption and unemployment is rampant. Thus, the unemployed youth with well-known traits of insecurity and high levels of pathological anxiety when precipitated by other factors provides the ideal force for recruitment by the militant organisations. The common

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people do not support and sympathise with the militants, but since the militants are their own kith and kin, they are compelled to provide them food, shelter and medical treatment. The majority of the people appear to be fed up with the situation in the Valley, desire peace and do not support the path of violence adopted by the militants. However, they are trapped in a mental crossfire, a fear of two guns; security forces on one side and the militants on the other. They are indifferent to the security forces, but respond positively to various developmental programmes/ schemes undertaken by them to improve their living conditions. They view the government as corrupt and want an effective government machinery with focus on development, security and revival of tourism. They want a solution, a way out of the conflict. The final settlement should recognise their need to live with dignity and sense of security, and least corrupt governance and some form of autonomy (*azadi*). The ceasefire has been welcome and given them respite from the ongoing violence. There is a sense of optimism and hope of some headway in resolving the Kashmir issue.

Environment

The terrain in J&K is mostly mountainous interspersed with valleys and lakes except for the Jammu region which generally comprises plains. The Valley is linked with Jammu region by NH-1A passing through the Banihal Tunnel across the Pir Panjal ranges in the south and Ladakh region through the Zojila pass across the Great Himalayas in the North. The Samshabari range running north-east to south westerly direction links the Great Himalayas in the North to the Pir Panjal ranges in the south. It dominates the Neelam and the Srinagar Valleys. It has several passes/gullies over it, which facilitate movement across this range. Its close proximity to the LoC (Line of Control) facilitates infiltration from across the LoC generally in one night. On the whole,

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the terrain favours infiltration from PoK into the Valley and poses a serious challenge for the security forces to block them. There is a fairly good network of roads in the Valley, but movement along the ridge lines is slow and time consuming thereby hindering the reaction time of the security forces. The Dal lake in Srinagar and the Walur lake near Sopore provide easy getaway routes for the militants. The three major urban centres of Srinagar, Baramulla and Anantanag are congested with narrow lanes and coupled with the presence of large population, impose severe constraints on the conduct of counter insurgency operations while providing excellent hideouts for the militants. These towns and immediate surroundings are the nerve centres of all militant activities as well as the key to the control of insurgency. The adjoining areas of Doda/Kishtwar enable the militants to seek safe sanctuaries for rest/refit and Punch-Rajouri provide several avenues across the Pir Panjal ranges for infiltration from west/south west. The area of Doda-Kishtwar assumes greater significance in the context of its proximity to the NH-1A as also the Banihal tunnel and could be akin to the strategic importance the Panjshir valley has in relation to the Salang pass on the Northern highway to Kabul in Afghanistan. In sum, the control of infiltration routes across the Samshabari and the Pir Panjal ranges, population control of the three urban centres of Srinagar, Baramulla and Anantanag as also the adjoining areas of Punch, Doda, Kishtwar assume greater significance for the successful conduct of counter insurgency operations.

Militants

There are a large number of militant organisations operating in J&K, the prominent amongst them being the JKLF, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, Lashkar-e-Tayeba and Harkat-ul-Ansar. These groups have different ideologies. While the JKLF is fighting for an Independent Kashmir, the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen advocates accession of Kashmir to Pakistan. Logically, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen has the full backing and

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support of its mentor, the ISI from across the borders. The cadres, generally comprise the youth, 76 percent of whom are between the age group of 15 to 30 years, 26 percent are illiterate and 48 percent comprise the dropouts below high school, 44.5 percent have joined the militant organisation due to coercion while the remaining 45.5 percent represent those endowed with a deep sense of hurt and feel economically deprived. Surprisingly, only a few, approximately 10 percent are committed to religion as the cause. The leadership is provided by well educated and highly motivated people who are committed to their ideology. Most of the groups are well organised with good communication network. The militant groups have given a sense of security and identity to its cadres and they have identified themselves with the group. The cadres are fairly well trained in handling weapons, explosives and other terrorist activities. Over the last few years they have been fully blooded and hardened. The local cadres have been augmented by some foreign nationals, viz., Pakistan (70 percent), Afghans (25 percent) and other Islamic countries (5 percent). Fifteen percent of the total militants comprise foreigners. These foreigners have been inducted with a view to arouse revolutionary and Islamic consciousness in the local population considered as apathetic/irreligious and stiffen the fighting potential of the Kashmiri militants, provide field expertise and finally reassure the local Kashmiris that the entire Islamic 'ummah' actively supports their cause. But they are mostly mercenaries and, there fore, not highly committed to the cause. Similarly, the motivational level of the local militants is also not high. The militant groups derive full support (moral, material and political) from Pakistan. The local population provides mainly passive support (food, shelter, intelligence and medical aid/treatment). As regards the strength of the militants, estimates differ. Presently, there are approximately 4000 to 5000 armed militants in the Valley. The weakness of various militant groups lies in their different ideologies/ causes. They are, therefore, a divided force and cannot be

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expected to provide a common front in their struggle against the security forces. They resort to the usual guerrilla warfare, terrorist activities like kidnappings, killings, and bomb blasts so as to strike terror among the local population and project the government's inability to provide them the necessary security. Over the last few years, the militants have suffered heavy setbacks and have been marginalised to a large extent. However, they continue to show their presence and draw attention of the world community by periodic/ sensational acts of terror; recent examples being the raid on the Red Fort in Delhi and several suicide missions on army/ Rashtriya Rifles/CRPF and police headquarters/camps/posts. They have not honoured the unilateral ceasefire declared by the government and continue to target the army/CRPF/ police personnel to keep the situation alive. They are likely to step up their activities during the ensuing summer months.

Trends

Certain trends that have emerged during the last few years are:

1. *Demographic Changes*

The total population as per the 1981 census was 59.53 lakhs. It increased to 100.69 lakhs (over one crore) by 2001. Comparative figures and region-wise distribution of population is given below:

	1981 Census	2001 Census
Valley	31,30,190 (52.57%)	54,41,341 (54.03%)
Jammu	26,90,616 (45.18%)	43,95,712 (43.6%)
Ladakh	1,33,091 (2.25%)	2,32,864 (2.4%)
Total	59,53,897	100,69,917

As per the 1981 census, the religion-wise distribution of population was, Muslims–64%, Hindus–32%, Sikhs–2.16%, Buddhists–1.15%, and Christians–0.26%.

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Despite the migration of approximately two lakh Hindus, Sikhs from the Valley there has been 2% increase of population.

It will be interesting to note that 89 percent of J&K comprising Jammu and Ladakh regions has 46 percent population while only 11 percent of J&K comprising the Valley has 54 percent of the population. Secondly, the politics of J&K since independence have been dominated by the Kashmiri Muslims with representation in the legislative assembly as follows:

Valley	–	46 seats
Jammu	–	37 seats
Ladakh	–	4 seats

Based on the voters list prepared for the Vidhan Sabha elections in J&K in 1996, the region-wise figures of men and women above 18 years of age is as under:

	Men and Women above 18 years	(Add 20%– below 18 years)	Total (in Lakhs)
Kashmir	24,10,230	4,83,044	28.9
Jammu	24,63,906	4,92,381	29.5
Leh (Ladakh)	1,43,492	28,698	1.7
Total	50,17,628	10,04,123	60.1

A comparative analysis with 1981 census will show that while there should have been an increase in the population of the Valley (Kashmir), the statistics show a decline by approximately 2.4 lakhs. On the contrary, there has been an increase in the population of Jammu region by approximately 2.2 lakhs. Obviously, there has been a shift of the population (approximately 2 lakhs) from the Valley to the Jammu region. This conforms to the Government of India survey, which states that out of approximately 2 lakh Hindus in the Valley, only 4800 are left, the balance have migrated to the Jammu region or other areas outside J&K.

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The logical conclusion that can be drawn from the above demographic changes is that while the Islamisation of the Valley (Kashmir) is complete, the process is being extended further south into the Jammu region (south of the Pirpanjal ranges) as per a deliberate plan to gradually force the non-Muslim population out of the area so that the militants could enjoy freedom of action and exert influence even outside the Valley.

There are also unconfirmed reports of the government having settled the 'Gujjars' in the border areas of RS Pura and Samba. This has resulted in creating pockets of population sympathetic to the militants with serious consequences and adverse effect on checking infiltration from across the borders into the Jammu region.

2. *Targeting Hindus South of the Pirpanjal Ranges*

Consequent to the cleansing of the Valley by driving out the Kashmiri Pandits, the militants shifted their focus towards the south and started increasingly targeting the Hindus south of the Pirpanjal ranges. Given below is the summary of major massacres that have taken place since 1990.

Major Massacres

Dates	Details
January 21, 1990	45 killed in Gowkadal, Srinagar
February 1990	19 killed in Handwara
March 30, 1990	30 killed in Zakoora on the outskirts of Srinagar
May 21, 1990	55 killed in Hawal in Srinagar following the assassination of Awami Action Chairman Mirwaiz Mohd.
May 1991	11 killed in Chota Bazar, Srinagar
June 6, 1993	45 shot and burnt alive in Sopore district
August 14, 1993	16 bus passengers massacred near Kishtwar in Doda district
October 22, 1993	37 killed in Barshalla in Doda district
June 1996	17 killed near Ramban
January 25, 1998	25 killed in Wandhama village
April 17-18, 1998	26 killed in Prankote in Udhampur district
June 19, 1998	29 massacred in Champnari, Doda district

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The analysis would show that prior to the incident of January 6, 1993, the target of the militants was the population in the Valley (Srinagar, Handwara, Sopore). Subsequently, out of the six incidents of major massacres, five were carried out in Doda, Ramban and Udhampur and only one (25 January 1998) in Wandhama village (Srinagar). The trend, therefore, is quite clear, that is to terrorise the local population (mainly Hindus) south of the Pirpanjal ranges (like in the Valley, bring this region also under the domination of the Muslims).

3. *Suicide Missions*

Militancy took a new turn in the latter part of 2000, in that the militants started carrying out suicide missions targeting the Rashtriya Rifles, the CRPF camps and head-quarters of the J&K Police. A suicide mission was also launched at the airport. Undertaking such daring missions only shows that either the motivational level of the militants is very high or these are desperate attempts to recoup their sagging morale. But one thing is certain, they are able to inflict greater damage and more casualties than they themselves sustain.

4. *Response to the Ceasefire*

The militants have refused to honour the ceasefire declared by India. The main impact of this would be visible only during the summer months because in any case the militant activities are generally at low key during the winter months (December–April 2001). India therefore, chose the right time/season to declare a unilateral ceasefire and in the bargain brought about tremendous diplomatic pressure on Pakistan to cease terrorism across the LoC.

External Support

There is adequate evidence to suggest that the militants in J&K enjoy political, moral and material support from

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Pakistan's ISI. The contiguity of Kashmir with PoK and the terrain facilitate the trans-LoC move of militants. It is estimated that there are approximately 80 training camps in Pakistan/PoK where cadres are trained and equipped. Besides, the local cadres have been augmented by foreign nationals from some of the Islamic countries with a view to internationalise the Kashmir issue, propagate the concept of *ummah* and uniting the holy warriors as well as masses under one flag of 'jehad' (holy war). Pakistan has undertaken a well orchestrated psychological campaign directed against various agencies (Kashmiris, other citizens of India, the security forces and the international community) for fundamentalisation of the Kashmir issue. Pakistan has raised the Kashmir and violation of human rights issues at various international forums. Kashmir is the core issue for any bilateral talks between India and Pakistan. In reality, Pakistan has waged an indirect war (proxy war) and wants to bleed India to death by a 'thousand cuts'; and annex Kashmir possibly to avenge its humiliating defeat of 1971. It is worth noting that the only people who have affinity with the Kashmiris are those residing in the Muzzaffarabad region of PoK. The people of Gilgit, Hunza and Baltistan in northern PoK as also the people of Mirpur in southern PoK are quite different to the Kahmiris. The international community including the UNO, USA and non-Muslim countries have condemned the violence in the Valley and called upon India and Pakistan to resolve the issue bilaterally.

Government

To begin with, there was Governor's rule in J&K since the resignation of Farooq Abdullah in January 1990. The real signals of a full-fledged insurgency errupting in J&K came in December 1989 with the kidnapping of Rubaiya, daughter of Sh Mufti Mohd Sayed the then Minister of Home Affairs at the centre. The government at the centre had apparently buckled down during the negotiations for her release in

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exchange for some hard core militants and this emboldened the militants. Subsequently also, the government, both in J&K and at the centre appeared soft in handling the militancy till additional troops were inducted towards the end of summer 1990. Since then, while the government at the centre appeared firm, the local government officials did not dare annoy the militants. Therefore, despite the special economic package announced for J&K, development activities came to a grinding halt. Corruption was rampant. Schools and colleges had to be closed. The militants 'diktat' ran and the people responded to their call for *bandhs*. It is to the credit of the security forces that there was a turning point in their favour and the militancy was fully contained. Elections to the Vidhan Sabha and 11th Lok Sabha were held and the National Conference (NC) under Farooq Abdullah came to power in 1996. With the installation of a local government in J&K, the situation showed considerable improvement. With better coordination under the chairmanship of Farooq Abdullah, the insurgency has been gradually brought under control. There are positive signs of peace returning to the Valley and the militants seem to have been marginalised. But the sting is still there and the government will have to act with firmness to overcome the present stalemate for a final settlement of the issue by taking bold political initiatives during this period of ceasefire.

Security Forces

The security forces comprise the regular army, BSF, CPO forces and the state police. The local police is the weakest link and requires to be revitalised. The regular army is the cutting edge and carries out the majority of the counter insurgency operations besides guarding the LoC, the BSF/ CPO forces are coopted in a supportive role. Over the last 8 years of insurgency, the army has acquitted itself with honour and its performance has been commendable. While dealing with the militants on one hand, its focus on the other

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hand has been on winning the hearts and minds of the people. It has handled sensitive issues like the Hazratbal and Charar-e-Sharif crisis with dexterity. Overall, the militancy has been fully contained and the militants marginalised. Though long tenures involving active CI operations coupled with poor habitat have led to combat fatique and early burnout with signs of stress at the lower levels, but the motivational level remains high. It has successfully withstood the pressures against human rights violation activists and hostile media. However, there are problems of command and control structure at the operational level *vis-a-vis* the state paramilitary forces and the CPO. Finally, while at the tactical level the operational techniques are well defined, the problems are often compounded by the absence of clear cut military doctrine at the strategic level.

Assessement of the Situation in the Valley

From an analysis of the variables, the following broad conclusions can be drawn:

(a) *Cause*

The feeling of alienation due to economic and political deprivation fuelled by Muslim fundamentalism appears to be the main cause of the conflict manifesting itself in the demand for some form of autonomy (*azadi*).

(b) *Local Population*

The local population appears to be fed up with the gun culture and looks forward to an end to violence. The ceasefire has generated hopes for peace and some settlement. The people expect corruption free governance with emphasis on development of the state.

(c) *Militants*

The militants though marginalised still have the sting to keep the pot boiling. The situation seems to have passed

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from the novices to the battle hardened groups with foreign mercenaries dominating and these groups do not seem to honour the ceasefire. The trend is towards escalating the situation during the ensuing summer.

(d) *External Support*

Pakistan is unlikely to give up and will continue to make attempts to annex Kashmir through proxy war. The international community calls for restraint and urges India and Pakistan to resolve the issue through bilateral dialogue.

(e) *Security Forces*

The security forces have done a commendable job in containing the insurgency, but still there are problems to be overcome, particularly at the strategic level.

(f) *Government*

Though the popular government has been in office since October 1996, its performance is far from satisfactory. The administration is still not fully functional and the local police needs total revamping.

In the overall context, a 'stalemate' appears to have set in with the likelihood of a protracted conflict. Now, it is a battle of 'wills'; the will of the security forces to continue maintaining relentless pressure and the 'will' of the militants to sustain it and above all the 'will' of the government, both at the centre and the state levels to take some bold political and economic initiatives to assuage the feelings of the Kashmiris. Time is running out even for Pakistan. A way needs to be found to break the impasse and bring General Musharraf to engage in positive talks.

Possible Options for Resolution of the Problem

Having analysed the situation, let us now examine the possible options available for the resolution of the Kashmir issue.

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Parties Involved

There cannot be a solution without taking into consideration the various parties that are involved in the conflict and have stakes in Kashmir. Undoubtedly these are:

(a) *India*

India cannot accept any further accession of that part of Kashmir which is now with India and ignores the interests of the Hindus in Jammu region and Buddists of Ladakh. India seeks an honourable settlement that does not seem to give the impression of having lost her honour and territory.

(b) *Pakistan*

Wishes for annexation of the whole of Kashmir, but may also settle for its independence or territorial gains of the Muslim belt.

(c) *Local Population*

The Muslims want either accession with Pakistan or independence, but the majority may agree for the conversion of the LoC into a permanent border with some kind of autonomy.

(d) *Militants*

The majority want accession to Pakistan except JKLF which is demanding independence, but may agree to any negotiated settlement between India and Pakistan with some share in the future power structure as the price for the sacrifices they have made during the struggle. Except JKLF, all pan-Islamic militants groups would abide by Pakistan's stance.

From the divergent interests of the parties involved, the whole issue appears very complex. And complex issues have no easy solutions.

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S.No.	Options	India	Pakistan/Militants	Local Populations	Other Countries
1.	Ethnic flooding and altering the demographic profile of the Valley by encouraging large-scale Hindu migration in Kashmir.	(a) Means repeal of Article 370 of the constitution and not acceptable to all political parties. (b) Safety and security of Hindus will pose serious problems and heavy public spending to create the necessary infrastructure.	No	No	
2.	Exercise the military option to crush the militancy	(a) Unlikely to succeed due to the demographic pattern of majority Muslims in the Valley. (b) Sealing of the border not possible due to mountainous terrain. (c) Corrosive impact on the ethos and morale of the army. (d) Increased involvement of the army may not be acceptable	No. May raise human rights violations; would continue to support the militancy	No	Could condemn India for human rights violation
3	Continue to contain the insurgency and hope to wear down the spirit of the militants (stalemate)	Unlikely to succeed for reasons given above. Protracted conflict may be prohibitive in human, financial cost.	No	No	USA may pressure Pakistan to stop abetting militancy
4.	Concede the Valley to Pakistan and retain Jammu, Kargil/Leh	Politically not feasible, will do so at its own cost.	May be acceptable as an interim measure, but Pakistan may again revive its claim for the whole of J&K.	While the Muslims may accept, not acceptable to Hindus, Buddhists KLF may resent further division of the state	Would affect border negotiations with China. Not acceptable to JKLF.

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S.No	Options	India	Pakistan/Militants	Local Populations	Other Countries
5.	Shared sovereignty Kashmir becomes condominium between India and Pakistan with joint administration	No	No	No	Not acceptable, makes the issue more complex.
6.	Hold plebiscite as per UN Security Council Resolution of 21 April 1948.	No	Will agree, but without pulling out the Pakistani troops which is apre condition to holding of plebiscite.	The Muslims will agree, but Hindus/ Budhists may not	Referendum is a dead issue as far as the UN is concerned.
7.	Further partition on geographical and ethinic considerations (Chenab Solution)	No. The Hindus and Budhists will feel unsafe.	May agree with Muslim majority areas including Kargil and Pak's northern areas	Not acceptable to Hindus and Budhists.	
8.	The Indian protectorate option. J&K to control all domestic and external issues except defence.	No.Would go beyond pre-1952 status (No control with J&K except defence, foreign affairs and communications.	Not acceptable	May be acceptable	—
9.	Independent Kashmir	No	May not be acceptable.	May accept	May not be acceptable to China.
10.	LoC as international border with some adjustments.	Yes. India would have to effect some concessions to Pakistan. India will have to take drastic steps to revamp the administration.	May be acceptable under US pressure.	May accept.	Acceptable to JKLF Will be a welcome step by the world community.

Note: From the evaluation of the above options, it as evident that the only option that has possibility of acceptance by all the parties is the conversion of the LoC into international borders realising that as of now it is the harsh reality. However, certain form of autonomy will need to be granted to the state.

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(e) *Examination of the Options*

In light of the above mentioned stands of various parties to the conflict, let us now examine different options and ramifications of being acceptable/not acceptable/ acceptable with modifications through negotiations by different parties.

Course of Action

In the light of the aforesaid conclusion India should pursue the following multipronged strategy before the period of ceasefire ends in May 2001 (The ceasefire came to an end without any fruitful outcome. The Agra summit also failed to achieve any break through. The December 13, 2001 attack on the Parliament heightened the tension between India and Pakistan resulting in the Military build up and deployment of troops along the borders. The stalemate therefore continues.):

(a) Bring about international pressure, especially that of USA on Pakistan through active diplomacy to stop cross border terrorism in Kashmir.

(b) Explore various channels including the Hurriyat Conference and moderate militant groups to accept the ceasefire and stop violence in the Valley so that a conducive atmosphere is created for further negotiations.

(c) Once, Pakistan and the militant groups agree to hold negotiations, then pursue the option of converting the LoC into an international border. In so doing both India and Pakistan will have to be accomodative so that adjustments in the alignment of the LoC could be carried out.

Hard Option

If for some reason all avenues for resuming the talks with Pakistan are closed, then India will have to consider

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very seriously the consequences of a protracted conflict in terms of the price that India will pay in human lives as well as the increasing financial burden with the long-term prospect of the situation turning in favour of the militants. India should learn from history; in that, the USA had to disengage from Vietnam because it could not withstand the human cost and the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan because they could not sustain both, the casualties as also the financial burden. Prolonged involvement of the army also is not conducive to its ethos and morale. Pakistan, after all cannot be allowed indefinitely to inflict wounds on India without any damage to itself. Should that situation come, then India must take into consideration two important factors:

(a) *Nuclear Factor*

In case of war a nuclear exchange cannot be ruled out. India should, therefore, prepare itself for this worst case scenario. However, just because Pakistan possesses nuclear capability should not deter India from exercising the inevitable hard option of war.

(b) *Sino-Pak Relations*

Given the close relations between China and Pakistan, India may be forced to fight a two front war, which is detrimental to her interests. It should be India's endeavour to neutralise China diplomatically and dissuade her from aiding Pakistan.

Conclusion

India has taken the right step of declaring unilateral ceasefire so as to explore the possibilities of resuming the dialogue with Pakistan. It is equally important to explore all the possible avenues to seek a negotiated settlement. The issue is rather complex and there are no easy solutions to it.

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Should Pakistan fail to respond positively, then India may be compelled to exercise the hard option of declaring war. After all the stalemate in the situation cannot be allowed to continue indefinitely without adverse and serious consequences.

It is hoped that by end-May the government will review the situation in its right perspective and evaluate the option of going to war *vis-a-vis* the price it may incur in terms of human lives and financial burden of a protracted conflict.

(The failure of the Agra summit, the December 13, 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament leading to deployment of troops on both sides and non-compliance by Pakistan of the conditions set by India has led to complete breakdown of any political dialogue. It is therefore evident that India has no other option but to use the military option if Pakistan's instransigent attitude continues for long.)

THE AGRA SUMMIT—FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION

The hype and euphoria created by the media, both in India and Pakistan regarding the Agra summit for over a month had raised hopes of the people of the two countries regarding a possible settlement of the long outstanding issue of Kashmir. Regrettably, more space and time was devoted to extraneous issues like the place where the two dignitaries would stay and how these were being done up, the menu that would be prepared and the places that General Musharraf and Begum Saheba would visit. Similarly, during the summit, more emphasis was on understanding the body language of the two leaders and whether the chemistry of their minds were working or not. After the summit was over, articles are pouring in and seminars/panels of discussions being organised to once again debate on issues like who gained what, why did the summit end in a deadlock or remained inconclusive, the role of the media and what was

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the hidden hand that scuttled the signing of the agreement or the joint statement. Once again trivial issues have overshadowed matters of substance.

Now that the post-mortem of the summit is over, let us focus on the substantial issues that have emerged during the summit and how we as Indians should respond to evaluate our future courses of action/options.

(a) From the Pakistan side, General Musharraf has made his mind very clear. In fact, India should be grateful to him for giving a clear insight into his mind. The issues that he has raised are:

(i) Kashmir is the core issue for Pakistan. This has remained a contentious issue since the Partition and led to the Indo-Pak conflicts of 1948, 1965, 1971 and the Kargil war. A lot of blood has been shed over it. Therefore, there cannot be any peace with India without first resolving this issue. He also said that we may call it by any other word, like the main issue or the central issue, the fact is that Kashmir is a disputed territory.

(ii) There is no terrorism from across the borders in Kashmir. It is a freedom struggle by the people of Kashmir (Mr Abdul Sattar has further denied any existence of borders with India in Jammu and Kashmir. He has clarified that the LoC cannot be termed as borders. In other words, General Musharraf, despite his clarification does not seem to honour the Indo-Pak Simla Accord, 1972 and the Lahore Declaration).

(iii) The governments of India and Pakistan cannot impose a solution on the Kashmiris. Their wishes will have to be kept in mind when reaching any settlement on Kashmir. The representatives of the Kashmiris (in this case the All Party Hurriyat Conference) will have to be coopted as the third party to reach any mutual agreement.

(b) What has been India's stand with particular reference to Kashmir?

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(i) Kashmir is not the main issue, but only one of the many issues. The approach of the two countries should, therefore, be broad-based and discussions should include all outstanding issues including Kashmir.

(ii) The question of terrorism across the borders in Kashmir is a linked problem and cannot be over-looked while discussing Kashmir. Pakistan should therefore stop supporting terrorism in Kashmir so that a peaceful atmosphere is created to progress further talks on Kashmir.

(iii) All Party Hurriyat Conference is not the true representative of the Kashmiris. J&K has an elected government and that is, therefore, the true representative of the Kashmiris.

(iv) India also mentioned that J&K was an integral part of India and, therefore, while the situation in Kashmir could be discussed, its status was non-negotiable.

From the analyses of the above, it would be seen that the stands taken by India and Pakistan are very diverse and therefore difficult to reconcile in the near future. They are so complex that there are no easy solutions in sight. The implication is loud and clear that the blood-bath in Kashmir will continue unabated for some more years to come and it might encourage the militant groups to escalate the situation. Pakistan is likely to pursue its policy of waging the proxy war as that is the most cost effective option for her and places her in an advantageous situation to negotiate from a position of strength. Therefore, while we may keep our hopes alive for the success of talks in future, we must continue our efforts to contain the violence without further alienating the local population. The main burden of doing so will continue to be shouldered by the security forces, the army in particular.

Therefore in the absence of Pakistan relenting in its support to the militancy in J&K and a solution nowhere in sight in the foreseeable future, what is the course of action that India should adopt in the future?

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Firstly, India should continue to hold talks with Pakistan. The contention of some intellectuals that such talks are meaningless because India cannot offer any concessions on J&K may not be right. The door to talks should always be kept open especially with a belligerent neighbour like Pakistan who possesses nuclear capability with the hope that wisdom will finally prevail upon its intransigent leadership. In this context, therefore the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister must keep the channels of dialogue open. However, for any future talks, the following aspects should be kept in mind:

(a) The government must create a consensus on our objective in Kashmir. Unfortunately, there seems to be some confusion about it. While dissent is not uncommon in a democracy, but a decision in this regard will need to be taken by the government in the best interests of the nation. There cannot be any compromise on the fact that the whole of J&K including the portion now under Pakistan's control is an integral part of India. Therefore, there cannot be any discussion with regard to the status of the state.

(b) Pakistan has captured a portion of J&K through aggression and has evil designs on the rest of the state especially the Valley. The terrorism across the LoC has been perpetuated by Pakistan and this must end. Pakistan must honour the Simla Agreement, 1972 and the Lahore Declaration, 1998.

(c) Referendum is no longer an issue.

(d) Having firmed up in our aim/objective on Kashmir and terrorism, our leaders must realize that we are a strong nation, and therfore, they must not talk weak. We are right and let not rhetoric show that.we are wrong.

Secondly, the nation has to be prepared for a long haul and expect no easy breakthrough on Kashmir. As Indians,

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we must realise that there is always a human cost and a financial burden as the price to be paid for ensuring the territorial integrity of the nation. The nation is at test and we must not be found wanting.

Thirdly, there is a requirement to pursue a multi-pronged strategy on Kashmir to either contain and if possible resolve the insurgency. The strategy should encompass:

(a) Degrading of the militancy by the security forces. This will require better management of our borders including its effective domination, coordinated effort by all the agencies of the centre and the state and enhancement of the capability of the army through upgradation of its weapons/surveillance and communications capability. The army hierarchy must understand that the nation is engaged in a proxy war and therefore it is its primary role to fight and degrade the militancy without alienating the local population.

(b) Better management of the media and conduct of psychological operations. Media in today's context is a very powerful tool to influence public opinion and the nation cannot give lip service to this vital aspect. The media should be fully exploited to conduct psychological operations targeted at the world to convey to the International community that Pakistan is pursuing a two nation theory; change in the public opinion in Pakistan—against the futility of its military dictators in pursuing a policy of war thereby breaking the economy of the country, convince the militants that they are being used as pawns by the Pakistani military dictatorship, motivate our soldiers that they are fighting for a righteous cause and the nation is fully behind them and finally convince the local people that their welfare lies in being part of India.

(c) Increasing the cost for Pakistan to deter it from supporting the proxy war. After all, Pakistan cannot

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continue its policy of blooding India through a thousand cuts without being punished. India has the capability and should no longer hesitate to do so. At the same time continue engaging Pakistan diplomatically.

Fourthly, India has to pursue a long-term policy of economic development and enhancing the capability of its armed forces. If the nation has a sound economy and strong armed forces, then not only Pakistan, but no other nation would have the courage to violate India's borders.

Finally, there are two other issues which seem to worry us. These are:

(a) Nuclear status of Pakistan. It appears that Pakistan is overplaying its nuclear card and putting psychological pressure on India. It is not understood how we feel more threatened. In case of a nuclear exchange, India may be destroyed partly, Pakistan will not exist at all.

(b) Sino-Pakistan relations. Pakistan may be drawing strength from its strong military relations with China. But can we overlook the fact that if China intervenes in case of a Indo-Pak conflict USA will not remain a silent spectator. Given the good relations of India with the USA, we could depend upon them for neutralising China. Let us also not forget India's old trusted ally Russia to come to its help in a crisis situation.

In conclusion, there has to be an attitudinal change in the people of India. We give the impression of being soft and therefore, we are vulnerable. We are a strong nation and therefore, let us not talk weak, when we are right, let not rhetoric prove us wrong. In the context of Kashmir, our attitude to compromise and concede must change.

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THE INDO-PAK MILITARY STAND-OFF— HOW LONG WILL INDIA WAIT FOR PAKISTAN TO CONCEDE THE DEMANDS?

The militant attack on the Indian Parliament on December 13, 2001, though successfully dealt with, left every Indian stunned. It stirred the emotions of all sections of the society and every one was charged with anger. After all it was an attack on the temple of democracy. Even the International community condemned it as a barbaric attack. The government was finally shaken up and coerced into concrete action against the perpetrators of this act. It generated a lot of activity at the political and the diplomatic levels. The cabinet committee on security met regularly to chart out the Indian response. While the Delhi Police started the detailed investigations, it was evident that Pakistan's ISI had a hand in it.

The government, therefore, decided to punish Pakistan and imposed certain sanctions. The Samjhauta Express and the PIA flights were terminated. The Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan was recalled and the staff at the High Commission reduced by half. Simultaneous with these sanctions, the armed forces were ordered to mobilize and move to their operational locations. This was done with speed and the armed forces were fully deployed by end of the year. The dawn of the new millennium therefore saw the opposing forces of India and Pakistan, deployed eyeball to eyeball.

The international community especially USA and UN called for exercising restraint which manifested in heated diplomatic moves to diffuse the situation, there were hopes of a meeting of the two leaders. General Pervez Musharraf and Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee in Kathmandu during SAARC summit. General Musharraf astonished Shri Vajpayee by walking up to him and offering a handshake. But all these were probably gestures with no substantial change of

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attitudes and minds. India adopted a harder stance and placed two demands viz. Handing over 20 terrorists residing in Pakistan and stopping cross-border terrorism as pre-conditions to any further action to pull back the forces.

On January 12, 2002, General Musharraf once again surprised the world by his speech to the nation, which was telecast live to the whole world. He called for re-orientation of his national policy of reigning in the fundamentalists and regulating the madrassas. But there appeared to be no change in Pakistan's policy towards Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan has also indicated its reluctance to hand over the terrorists wanted by India. As regards the cross-border terrorism, there are no tangible signs of any let up by Pakistan. India has called up for putting in practice what Musharraf had promised and has decided to give him some time to translate his new policy into action. But no time frame for this has been laid down. Thus the deployment along the borders is likely to remain operative leading to a situation of stalemate.

The common man in India and the men in uniform to that extent are disappointed because they all expected some concrete action. Now that a stalemate exists, several issues have come up:

- How long will India wait for Pakistan to concede her demands?
- How long will the troop deployment continue along the borders and what are the consequences of indefinite deployment?
- Will India adopt the hard option and go to war if Pakistan does not meet her demands?

Let us try and answer these issues. Firstly, Pakistan has already indicated its reluctance to hand over the terrorists wanted by India. On the contrary, there was rumour that Pakistan would also put similar demand on India on the issue

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of stopping cross-border terrorism. Indications are that the situation may escalate during the ensuing summer. It is time, therefore, for India to tie down Pakistan to a definite time frame to act, failing which India must choose the hard option. Secondly, the troop deployment cannot continue indefinitely. Not that it will affect the morale of the troops. The Indian soldier is well motivated and has enough resilience. But the important point is that the armed forces want to sort it out for good. Either Pakistan responds to India's demands or else face the consequences, it is for certain that pull back of forces without achieving anything substantial will not be appreciated by the armed forces.

Evidently, there is no choice before the nation but to go to war should Pakistan fail to respond positively. If that happens, India must be prepared for the following:

One, a nuclear exchange if the war escalates beyond the threshold of Pakistan's level of tolerance.

Two, be prepared to withstand the world pressure to call for a cease-fire and continue the pressure till the political/military objectives are achieved.

In conclusion, it can only be said that India has taken a step from where we can move forward towards a decisive war only or the nation must have the will to continue the deployment till Pakistan concedes India's demands.

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14

Terrorism

India's Response

The war in Afghanistan code name 'Infinite Freedom' concluded in a spectature victory. The Talibans had been defeated and some of the Al Qaida Cadres were captured/ killed. However, the top leadership of these outfits continue to be elusive.

The American President, George Bush gave a commitment to deal with terrorism where ever it existed. Axiomatically, India expected the Americans to also tackle the terrorists operating in Jammu and Kashmir by pressurising General Parvez Musharraf to rein in the Jihadis.

General Musharraf gave indications of dealing with the militant groups and dismantle their support bases during his speech to the nation on January 12, 2002. There was expectations of his taking action when several Jihadi leaders were arrested. India, therefore, decided to give him time to implement his new policy and translate his words into deeds.

However the successive events over the past six months have indicated that there has been no let up in the cross border terrorism and terrorist attacks have increased. Some of the terrorist attacks, namely the attacks on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly on 1st October and the Indian Parliament on December 13, 2001 were quite bold and spectacular.

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However India showed a lot of restraint and responded by merely imposing limited diplomatic sanctions. These incidents also led to the mobilisation of forces of both the countries and the stand off continues.

The terrorists once again struck on May 15, 2002 at Kaluchak (Jammu) killing 30 women and children, families of those soldiers who are deployed along the borders indicating likely upsurge in their activities during the summer months. Obviously, neither Pakistan made any attempt to rein in the Jihadis nor did the Americans pressurize enough to deter Pakistan in perpetrating violence in Jammu and Kashmir.

The emotions of the people of India and particularly the soldiers who lost their kith and kin were once again charged to seek revenge. There is a tremendous pressure on the government to take stern action. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Prime Minister has already indicated to George Bush that India would take action. Shri George Fernandes, the Defence Minister has also called for punishing those responsible (meaning Pakistan) for these terrorist attacks. General S. Padmanabhan, the Chief of the Army Staff too has indicated that the time for discussions and negotiations was over. It was time to act.

The Lok Sabha discussed the issue on 17 May to arrive at the consenses and formulate the future strategy/course of action. Whatever, be the outcome of the discussions, there are certain issues on which there can be no disagreement.

- Pakistan is the nerve Centre of Terrorism and will continue to support cross border terrorism in J&K. She is undoubtedly harbouring all the Talibans and Al Qaida cadres who escaped from Afghanistan.
- USA has its own compulsions to keep Pakistan on board for completing its task in Afghanistan. It is therefore unlikely that George Bush will either pressurize General Parvez Musharraf beyond certain limits or criticize India for taking hard action.

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- The Indian Army has been deployed along the borders for the last six months. They, therefore, have had adequate time to finalise the operational plans and prepare themselves fully to undertake any offensive. In fact, the armed forces personnel are keen that India takes some decisive action.
- India would be fully justified in responding with the hard option and any military action would be quite legitimate/justifiable.
- Pakistan has a well trained and professional army. Therefore, she is a potent adversary, hence the task before the Indian Armed Forces is quite challenging and formidable.
- The credibility of India is at stake. If no military action is taken, then the country will lose its credibility as a powerful nation. In that case, India will be categorised as a soft state incapable of taking hard options.
- India cannot look for a better time and opportunity to punish Pakistan for supporting cross border terrorism in J&K and elsewhere in India. Let not the exponents of nuclear threat from Pakistan deter India from pursuing a policy which is in our national interest. Equally vital for India is to pursue a policy as an independent state and not be constrained by pressures from the world community

Lastly let us not expect miracles and end of all troubles. Punishing Pakistan, though necessary, will not bring terrorism to a grinding halt. As Khushwant Singh has said, 'It is all in the mind'. It is an ideology and a commitment of some individuals to that ideology. Therefore unless there is a change of mind, the terrorists will continue to flourish whether on the name of religion or hatred for certain nations and their policies." Be that as it may, India must not allow Pakistan to use terrorism as a weapon to achieve her political/strategic aims.

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Appendix A

DETAILS OF MAJOR MILITANT GROUPS OPERATING IN J&K, ASSAM AND THE NORTH EAST REGION

Jammu & Kashmir

1. **Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF)**: Pro-independence Kashmir group mainly comprising the local Kashmiri Muslims. Set up in 1960 by Maqbool Bhatt and Ammanullah Khan (now in PoK). Revived in the late 1980s. Presently led by Yaseen Malik. Though a moderate group and no more an active militant outfit.
2. **Al-Umar Mujahideen**: Deadly group of downtown, Srinagar. Founded by Mushtag Zargar. Struggling to gain prominence.
3. **Al-Jehad**: Emerged in 1991. Most active in South Kashmir. Non-existent.
4. **Al-Barq:** Founded in 1994 and seen as the armed wing of Peoples Conference, Abdul Gani Lone. Non-existent. (Mr. Lone was killed in Srinagar on May 21, 2002)
5. **Harkat-ul-Mujahideen:** Pan-Islamic group formed in 1993. Also known as Harkat-ul-Ansar and Al Faran. Very active and ruthless.
6. **Lashker-e-Tayyeba:** Pan-Islamic group. Formed in 1994 , it operates from Pakistan. Very active and ruthless. Introduced 'fidayeen' (suicide attacks).
7. **Al Badr:** Formed in 1999 and mainly composed of foreign mercenaries. Operates from border areas under the direct control of ISI.
8. **Hizb-ul-Mujahideen:** A militant group of ethnic Kashmiris. Wants an honourable settlement of the Kashmir issue.

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9. **Jaish-e-Mohammad**: Pan-Islamic group formed in January 2000 by Maulana Masood Azar (killed on 28 March 2001). Gets lavish patronage of the ISI and notorious for human bombs.

Assam

10. **United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA):** This militant organisation came up on 7 April 1979. Its grievance was that the Assamese people who have been continuously exploited by the non-Assamese especially the business community and the Bangladeshi refugees who have changed the balance of power in the state. Accordingly the ULFA targetted corrupt traders, black marketeers, hoarders, smugglers and refugees of foreign origin. They have active links with other militant outfits operating from Burma (KIA and NSCN).

11. **Bodo Security Force:** This militant group has emerged from the All Bodo Students Union. It was constituted in October 1989. They have links with NSCN, ULFA and other militant groups operating in the NE region.

12. **Militant Groups in other North East States:** There are several other militant groups operating in the North East region. The important groups are:

NSCN and NFG in Nagaland: The Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland is one of the oldest militant groups and is committed to the independence of Nagaland. A parallel militant group known as the Federal Government of Nagaland is also active in Nagaland. Both these groups operate from Myanmar. The NSCN is the best organised, trained and well armed in the region. They have close ties with KIA and ULFA. Ceasefire is generally negotiated with them.

PLA: The People's Liberation Army is active in Manipur and demanding independence from Manipur.

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TNV: The Tripura National Volunteers is committed to the liberation of Tripura.

ULVA: United Liberation Volunteers of Arunachal. A small groups formed in 1989 which has limited potential. Another group (UPVA) which stands for United People's Volunteers Army aims at eliminating corruption in Arunachal.

13. There is a nexus between various militant groups in the North East region and, therefore, the situation is rather volatile.

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Appendix B

OP PAWAN—MEMORIES OF WAR
BRIG SAMAY RAM, VSM, CDR 115 INF BDE
APPX–'P' SKETCH SHOWING AREA OF OPS
STATUS OF 115 INFANTRY BRIGADE PRIOR TO INDUCTION INTO SRI LANKA

I had taken over 115 Infantry Brigade in April 1986 after a momentous tenure as the Indian military attaché in Kabul (Afghanistan).On taking over command it soon dawned on me that the formation and myself had to train hard to be fit for operations. Exercise Brasstacks (February/March 1987) provided an ideal opportunity to mould ourselves into a cohesive, well trained formation capable of undertaking operations even at short notice. There was good understanding between me and the commanding officers. We, therefore, returned to barracks with great satisfaction.

However, the formation comprising 12 Grenadiers, 4/5 GR(FF) and 4 Mahar were maintaining the equipment and the jawans were looking forward to a peaceful stay with their families when the formation was once again mobilised for impending employment in Sri Lanka.

Unfortunately, the formation was deprived of the opportunity of being inducted as a whole. First, it was 4/5 GR which was loaned to 72 Infantry Brigade and later even the other two battalions 12 Grenadiers and 4 Mahar were ordered to join 18 Infantry Brigade to fill the void.

This was a peculiar and unprecedented situation for me as the brigade commander. I, therefore, reacted sharply and strongly recommended to my GOC the move of my headquarters alongwith 12 Grenadiers and 4 Mahar. On his turning down the request saying that these were orders from higher headquarters, I shot up a signal direct to the

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corps headquarters for the personal attention of the corps commander. Regrettably, even the corps commander appeared to be helpless in this matter.

I was thus left at the peace location with my headquarters only with all three of my battalions having been inducted into Sri Lanka. I personally thought that it was a disgrace to be commanding only a headquarters with no infantary battalions under command especially during war. To add to my anguish, casualties started being flown in for the last rites at our permanent location. I had thus the difficult task of not only explaining the reasons of my absence to the bereaved families, but also had to explain to them the reasons why we could not be fighting together. In my desperate attempt to get out of this situation, I sent a signal to the Military Secretary's Branch to post me out, but there was no response and I had to bide time for my induction.

Rest of the events for the intense phase of 'OP Pawan' are recorded hereafter.

Comments—There is a tendency on the part of higher headquarters to break up formations/units as piecemeal reactions to a situation as was done with my brigade. It is difficult to digest the decision to move two of my battalions, 12 Grenadiers and 4 Mahar and fill the void of 18 Infantry Brigade. It was against the basic norms and this decision cannot be viewed without suspicion of.subjectivity overriding objectivity in making such decisions.

12 October 1987

I was called to the Military Operations Directorate for briefing on 14 October 87. Combined briefing of commanders 41 Infantry Brigade, 62 Infantry Brigade and 115 Infantry Brigade was done. The most fascinating aspect was that having taken away all my battalions and grouping them under other formations, it was planned to appoint me

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as commander 41 Infantry Brigade to be launched into operations on the same night. I expressed my viewpoint that it would not be fair to attach me as a formation commander to a new formation and induct them into operations. If this had to be done, then it would be better to either post a new man on promotion or else post me out permanently and not attach. This suggestion was accepted. The other point of interest and also of major concern was the decision to place under my command, 5/1 GR, 10 Sikh and 3/5GR de-inducted from high altitude/Siachen Glacier. 5/1 GR was to report to Gwalior on 15 October, but actually reached on 16 October 87. 10 Sikh was still to move and was expected around 17/18 October 87. 3/5 GR was expected to reach its destination (Lucknow) by 21 October 87. Despite my request that it would be unfair to induct units arriving from field areas directly into operations of an entirely different nature, the suggestion was turned down. I also wanted that minimum one week should be given for these battalions to carry out the necessary preparations as also reorientation training.

I also suggested that since two units were being placed under me ex Gwalior, it would be prudent to shift the HQ to that location. The Military Operations Directorate agreed to this and consented to convey the same to BGS Central Command. However, on returning to permanent location I was asked not to move the HQ. But, since it was a local move, it was decided to move the HQ after two days i.e 18 October 87. In fact the HQ had to move on 17 October 87 as the induction was to take place commencing on 18 October 87. There appeared to be no channel of command. The orders were being received directly from Army Headquarters/Corps and suitable instructions were issued to materialise the transfer for controlled stores and so on. The arrangement of this nature has its inherent weakness and adverse effects.

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17 October 87

I along with the brigade headquarter moved to Gwalior. I took the opportunity of getting hold of 5/1 GR state of preparedness and addressing the men. Having seen the state of preparedness, I was totally convinced that the battalion had tremendous difficulties in carrying out its impending tasks. However, due to constraints of the critical situation in Sri Lanka pressures had resulted in overlooking this aspect especially when the national honour and prestige was at stake. In this case our country had given a commitment of fulfilling its role in bringing peace in Sri Lanka and its total commitment towards fulfilling the conditions of the accord.

I also felt that the grouping of the formation was not in the better interest of the service. I, therefore, sent a top secret signal to the GOC 54 Inf Div and GOC 1 Corps concerned as I felt morally bound to brief the higher commander more realisticallly and honestly. The problem however, got resolved on its own. I was told that the new grouping would include 5/1 GR, 6 GUARDS and 21 MADRAS ex 22 Inf Div. Even this was not final as I found entirely a different grouping on landing at Jaffna. I was to be given back 4 MAHAR and 6 GUARDS on arrival.

18 October 87

The induction commenced on 18 October1987. The brigade group consisting of HQ and attached elements and 5/1 GR, was allotted air effort of 1 × I L - 76, 2 × AN -32 and 10 × 737 in two separate lifts. The major observation on the move was that during peace time so much stress is laid on preparing load tables deploying different means of transportation, the availability, the number and type of aircraft during the actual move results in a mix up and revision of loads at the last moment. Our loads are voluminous and cumbersome. The air effort allotted for the

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stores was totally inadequate and had to be enhanced subsequently. Our drills of marking of stores for loading, and the loading procedures are very poor. A lot of stuff was being carried which was generally not required during operations. Carrying of unwanted stores not only results in misutilisation of the air effort which is so expensive, but also leads to delay in departure, upsetting the schedule of induction. Another point pertaining to the loads is that the persons in charge of stores had not bothered to lay down the correct priorities for move with the troops. Some persons moving by train had also brought their luggage for airlift. However, the formation was inducted into Jaffna sector by the end of the day via Madras. The troops moved by the 737. It was an interesting situation.

As per the orders received by me from the Millitary Operations Directorate, we were to be airlifted to Trincomallee and accordingly the heavy baggage and the transport column was planned to be moved by train to Madras and then to Trincomallee by ship.

When we took off ex Gwalior, I went to the cockpit and asked the captain as to the flying time to Trincomallee. The captain gave me a surprised look and told me that he had orders to fly to Jaffna (Plaley airfield). This came as a shock to me because we had already despatched our heavy baggage and vehicles by train to Trincomallee via Madras.

We finally landed at Plaley airfield in the late afternoon.

(**Comment**—It is surprising how such confusion takes place during war. As if breaking up the formation was not enough we had to be separated from our first line transport and heavy baggage).

There was nobody detailed by the division headquarters to ensure smooth induction. After landing from the aircraft I directly went to Div HQ (HQ 54 Inf Div) for my briefing. I was being briefed by almost all the officers whom I met, but there was no formal briefing in the operations room which is generally done by the Col GS.

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The Offg GOC Brig Kulwant Singh briefed me late in the evening and wanted to move the formation by the morning of the next day by last light 19 October. On 20 October, the formation was to commence advance from the firm base and establish contact with 4 MAHAR at North Kopai by last light 20 October 87. I, however, requested for time to be given to carry out reconnaisance as well as obtain necessary information of the militants organisation, their aim and tactics used by them. However, once again this aspect was overlooked and I had to finally plan my move at 1100 h, 19 October.

19 October 87

I had decided to carry out reconnaisance from 0700 to 0900h and allowed one hour reconnaisance for the company commanders. The move of the formation was planned around 10 AM, but it had to be delayed because even vital equipment like batteries for radio sets, steel helmets and so on which were some of the major deficiencies had not been issued. The formation commenced its advance without proper coordination. Some of the critical deficiencies came as late as 1300h and therefore, the move plan was modified accordingly. A very major decision had to be taken by me to move with the troops upto their destination either by foot or by helicopter. Consequently, the helicopter was placed and even the GOC desired that I avail of this flight. But having deliberated, I decided to move with the troops basically for two major reasons:

(a) I wanted to be with the troops especially on the day of commencement of operations to ensure a better start.

(b) I wanted to see for myself the *modus operandi* of the militants, the tactics adopted by them as also the weaknesses observed in reacting to certain types of situation. I feel that this was a right decision though difficult one.

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We were in the firm base by 1800h. I somehow had the intuition that it was unsafe to stay in the given base as also waste the whole night. I therefore, summoned CO 6 GUARDS to be prepared to move cross country by 2000h to establish contact with 4 Mahar who had earlier been inducted as part of 18 Infantry Brigade and now deployed at North Kopai. The CO showed his reluctance and uncertainty to execute the move. I, therefore, challenged his ego and said that if the GUARDS could not do it, then, I would task 5/1 GR. The commanding officer Col Bhatia, already a decorated officer, could not accept this and therefore, undertook this challenging task.

It was totally dark and drizzling. While 6 Guards moved out, the rest of the troops came under fire of LTTE from all directions. This was the initiation of my troops into the war. The troops were calm and did not open fire indiscriminately. On the contrary, they lit fires to warm their food and planned full night rest.

Two interesting developments took place during the night. Firstly, Commander 72 Infantry Brigade Brig Mishra panicked when the troops lit fires to warm their food saying that the enemy would see them. I reacted by saying that it was not an exercise where lighting of fire was prohibited and I wanted the LTTE to know that we were there. He could not win the argument.

Secondly, 6 GUARDS went out of communication and we were concerned about the progress of the move. My Brigade Major, Maj Vikram Puri took the bold step of moving about 1.5/2kms to HQ 72 Inf Bde and finally established contact with 4 MAHAR through HQ 18 Inf bde. It was delightful news that 6 GUARDS had established contact with 4 MAHAR by 0400 h, 20 October 87. The first task assigned to the brigade was thus executed almost 12 hours in advance.

The brigade was now tasked to contact South Kopai by last light 20 October 87.

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(**Comment**—Intuition and initiative are very important attributes of any commander, especially in war. It was because of this that I took the difficult decision to move 6 GUARDS cross country at night instead of wasting the night in the firm base. This decision paid handsome dividends and we executed our task 12 hours in advance.)

20 October 87

6 GUARDS had contacted North Kopai. The task was completed by the battalion with speed and a pivot was established by 0215 hours at Road Track junction and contact established with 4 MAHAR by 0400 h.

The brigade with 5/1 GR commenced its advance at 0630 h after marrying up with the combat team. It was realised after hearing the discussion with Commander 72 Inf Bde and combat team commander that there were certain anamolies in the employment of tanks and APCs as also the aspect of command and control. The combat team was under a full colonel and they were grouped with an Infantry Battalion 5/1 GR. This caused problem of command and control because a senior officer did not have the requisite troops to be given the command of the whole combat group. The second problem pertained to the employment of these elements. So far tanks and APCs were being employed in the conventional role of leading the advance of the infantry thereby suffering casualties.

In an unconventional war of this nature, it was felt that tanks and BMPs must act as a complementary force with security of the tanks and BMPs being provided by the Infantry. The third aspect was the movement of troops, while elements based on foot and mechanised move x-country, the vehicle column was road bound. The roads were extensively mined and, therefore, posed a serious danger to the movement of vehicles on roads. The fourth aspect which was apparent was the tactics of fire and move to be employed, battalion infantry/mechanised elements.

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The advance therefore, commenced with these parameters being kept in mind and having coordinated the common aspects, the brigade reached Road Tr junction GR 900040 at 1030h. The rate of advance, was approximately one kilometre per hour.

5/1 GR was given a pause enroute and thereafter tasked to advance with a view to establish contact with South Kopai from the West as early as possible. The tank column violated the basic principle of moving as a complementary force and therefore, suffered two casualties in tanks due to the tanks having gone on road without information. South Kopai was, however, contacted by 1400h. The Bde HQ elements including Rover Gypsy advanced along the axis Road Tr junction—North Kopai. There was severe resistance to the move of this column and the Engineers had to neutralise mines/explosives at two places, I cannot forget two important incidents that took place during the move. Firstly, when my group came under fire of the LTTE, I was standing in the open. Suddenly, four jawans of the defence platoon ex 5/1 GR surrounded me from all sides. When I asked them to take cover, one of them replied that my life was more important than theirs and, therefore, needed to be guarded. I was very moved and decided then that I would expose myself to equal danger as the men since I found this having a salutary effect on their morale. The second incident was a humourous one. While the firing was going on, I saw a Gorkha 'johnney' picking up a crying pup by the neck and put its neck into an earthern pot. When I asked him why he had done so, the 'johnney' grinned and said that the pup was making too much noise and giving away our position. War also has moments of fun. However, despite all this, contact with North Kopai was established by 1500h. The Bde HQ, thereafter, established itself and link up with 4 MAHAR took place to take over the command of the battalion.

(**Comments**—Boldness pays in war. Our commanders also

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expose themselves to danger, the men are willing to sacrifice their life for him.)

It was a very emotional moment. CO 4 MAHAR, Col Manoranjan and his boys were delighted to see us. It was a great reunion. 4 MAHAR thus came back into our fold.

While 6 GUARDS and brigade headquarters were in 4 MAHAR location, LTTE brought down heavy small arms fire from several directions.

I also realised that to progress operations towards Jaffna town, I had to have a helipad at North Kopai. I therefore, directed my field company commander to construct a helipad and also ensure its security. The field company commmander had just reverted from CME, Pune after an instructional tenure. He tried to argue that the Engineers could not be given the task of helipad security and this was not being taught at the CME. I was annoyed and directed him to obey the orders. I also told him to write to the CME and ask them to amend the precis to include this task for Engineers in the teaching. He did construct the helipad and secured it (Later on, I learnt that he did write a letter to the commandant, CME quoting this incident).

(**Comments**—A commander has to utilize his resources fully and in war such variations from the normal teaching are not uncommon.)

21 October 87

The brigade was to develop operations (ops) from North Kopai towards South Kopai. 6 GUARDS was to carry out this task. The battalion commenced advance at 0400h and established contact from the East with South Kopai by 0800 hours without any resistance during the move. 5/1 GR which had contacted South Kopai from the West was asking for heli-lift for replenishment and evacuation of casualities. The battalion continued to stay there hoping that the heli-lift would materialise, but it did not happen because the pilots

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felt that the helipad was not secure. The battalion did not clear the **fly** in path and had some trees obstructing it. Since the replenishment did not come, the casualties could not be evacuated by air. The force was, therefore, tasked to link up with 6 GUARDS at South Kopai. The MI-8 heli-lift for 5/1 GR and combat group were diverted to North Kopai and it was planned to send replenishments by road with escort. But the whole action got so delayed that it got dark and the vehicles could not be moved at night.

At about 1000h, I took off from the helipad for an aerial reconnaisance of South Kopai and the route to Jaffna. On return after about 30 minutes, I was greeted by machine gun fire from a nearby coconut orchard. One bullet went over my shoulder while another missed my right foot hardly by an inch. This was my first brush and closest encounter to being shot at. Luckily I took cover behind a destroyed tank and then moved to safety.

22 October 87

The day of Diwali started with the advance of a maintenance column ex North Kopai. The column reached without any opposition en route and linked up with 6 GUARDS and 5/1 GR at 0745h. By this time, 6 GUARDS who had received their replenishment the previous day had moved out with elements of mechanised infantry and tanks to establish contact with Five Road Junction (Star). The battalion had moved East of axis South Kopai-Jaffna on the Point Pedro Road. But as the battalion reached the area of cross road GR 8790003, the Mech columnn was separated and could not provide any fire specially due to dense plantation and built up area. 6 GUARDS, therefore, tried to capture cross roads without the support of armour and BMPs and, therefore, sustained two dead and about six wounded. Analysing the situation as critical, I decided to move the balance of mech force available at South Kopai under the CO of 5/1 GR alongwith two coys of 5/1 GR. The

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force was tasked to link up with elements of Bhinder force combat troop 6 GUARDS and therefore, exert pressure from the North West. This paid dividends and Road Junction was vacated by the militants. 6 GUARDS was asked to consolidate their posistion in area Road Junction and Star during the night. 5/1 GR with the other two companies (coys) and Commanding Officer (CO) left South Kopai after replenishment and linked up with his coys at Star which had been sent under the Second in Command (2IC). The battalion was asked to stay the night in area Star.

For the first time since the commencement of operations by my formation we were visited by a senior officer Maj Gen AS Kalkat. He came alongwith three bottles of scotch whisky sent for us by the COAS, Gen Sundarji. He conveyed the appreciation of the COAS and also congratulated me for executing such speedy operations. I was particularly elated to get a pat from my old instructor at the Staff College, Wellington.

23 October 87

It was a day of hardly any progress forward, but otherwise very busy. 4 PARA which was placed under command of the formation was to move directly from Palali airfield and join the Brigade at South Kopai. Their route was given as road Palali, Urumpirai, pivot at GR 900040 and then South Kopai. Unfortunately, the battalion moved with vehicles and during its advance from the pivot at Road Tr Junction it got involved in a road block at GR 895033. The unit lost two men and suffered four casualties. The battalion, however, reached South Kopai by about midday. The Brigade Headquarters elements were moved out from North Kopai to South Kopai alongwith two companies of 4 MAHAR under the 2IC. One coy of 4 MAHAR was ordered to establish the pivot at Road Tr Junction. However, this command was taken over by Commander 72 Infantry Brigade and 13 SIKH LI occupied this pivot.

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The coy under Maj Satinder ex 4 PARA was, therefore, utilised to establish pivot at Road Tr Junction west of South Kopai. Subsequently, Commander (Cdr) 72 Inf Bde was given the task of progressing operations southwards. He, therefore, ordered the pullout of the pivot at Road Tr Junction without relief. This created a very critical situation for the(B echelon) vehicles of 4 PARA and the casualties which were sent to this place. However, the situation was restored and the vehicles alongwith casualities of 4 PARA was directed back to 72 Infantry Brigade for subsequent airlift to South Kopai. 4 PARA was addressed by me at about 1530h and explained the modalities of the operations in this area. The battalion after replenishment moved to area Road Junction and linked up with 6 GUARDS. The Rover Gypsy accompanied 4 PARA upto Road Junction. On night 23/24 October the General Officer Commanding (GOC) rang me up and gave the task of cordon of temple in GR 872997 where 25,000 refugees were reported to have taken shelter. 5/1 GR was tasked to carry out this task by 0200 hours 24 October 87.

24 October 87

The operations of 5/1 GR commenced at midnight and the battalion contacted the temple GR 872997 by 0130h. We thus entered the heart of Jaffna. On reaching there it was discovered that the temple was occupied by only two civilians. I, therefore, directed 5/1 GR to push ahead and reach the area of twin temples GR 867995 where these refugees were reported. The battalion carried out the task by first light 24 October. 4 PARA commenced its operations at 0435 h and were tasked to link up with 18 GARH Rifles at the Residency. They were to advance from Road Junction and go directly towards the south to link up at the railway line. However, due to the change in the locations of the refugees in area Twin Temples, 4 PARA was ordered to move towards 5/1 GR so that the Brigade remained concentrated.

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While this was going on, one coy of 4 PARA moved behind the follow up serials of 5/1 GR and passing through the area of Twin Temples reached the area of Excise office and Agriculture office by 0830h to establish contact with 18 GARHWAL RIFLE by 0900h. Since only a coy had linked up, the rest of 4 PARA was ordered also to link up with its coy and deploy in the area of Excise office. At 1300 hour I left Road Junction with my Rover Gypsy and returned to the HQ in South Kopai by 1400 h. At 1500h, the GOC rang up and gave the following tasks to the Brigade:

(a) The area of Twin Temples was to be fully cordoned.

(b) The axis of maintenance was to be secured up to the Twin Temples.

(c) Probing was to be carried out towards the East to flush out the enemy from the areas through which units had not passed. Accordingly, the units were tasked as under:

  (i) 4 PARA was to occupy coy piquets at GR 875992, GR 873985 and GR 868981. Provide one coy for protection of helipad at South Kopai since the Engineers were now employed on other tasks.

  (ii) Carry out probing operations along the Kachehri road and clear militants up to 500 yards to 1000 yards on either side.

  (iii) 6 GUARDS was tasked to hold Road Junction and Star as also secure area of Hindu temple by last light 24 October alongwith two tanks and two BMPs.

  (iv) 5/1 GR was to continue cordoning of the Twin Temples, explore the possibility of securing a helipad to drop supplies for the refugees.

  (v) To clear his axis of maintenance from Star southwards.

  (vi) **4 MAHAR**. The unit was tasked to provide a pivot at Road Track Junction and hold with two coys minus platoon (pl) at North Kopai and one (coy) plus pl at South Kopai.

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It may be of interest that the Rover Gypsy was under almost 30 to 45 minutes of intensive fire by the militants at the cross roads. This was the fourth time that the Rover Gypsy had come under fire by the militants. At 1230h there was an emergency message from the Division HQ to send a combat team with some infantry to Road Junction occupied by 4 PARA and release pressure on them as these were being fired upon by MMG, rifles and (Rocket Launcher (RL). The combat team consisting of three tanks and three BMPs under Maj Bhinder and one infantry platoon of 6 GUARDS was despatched for overcoming this resistance. This was probably the LTTE force which escorted Prabhakaran and Mahitya out of Jaffna to move towards Vanni jungles.

In the afternoon, I personally accompanied the relief of supplies columnn to the Twin Temples. The column was escorted by tanks and BMPs, En route, the LTTE fired at one of the tanks. There was an exchange of fire. And to my horror, I saw my Forward Observation Officer, Senior JCO suddenly dropping dead to the ground. He had been hit by a rocket and his whole system, the spinal cord and the intestines were thrown open. He was barely 5 meters in front of me. This was the third closest encounter I had with death. The rocket could have as well hit me. It is then that it dawned on me that every bullet is marked and one dies only when destined to do so.

On my way to the Twin Temples, I carried the line party to lay the telephone line and was through to my HQ on telephone. The next morning, the army commander called up to speak to me and convey his appreciation of the job done. He could not believe that I was speaking from Twin Temples area.

25 October 87

It was becoming clearly evident that forces could not

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be maintained by air for a prolonged period because of the limited air effort available as also some incidents of helicopters being shot up resulting in damage to very expensive equipment. Therefore, the only way of sustaining the troops for a prolonged period was to resort to maintenance by road. This meant clearing of the axis of maintenance and bringing forward replenishment of amunition and rations. Thus, the tasks that were set for the brigade on this day were:

(a) The clearing up of axis of maintenance from North Kopai to the forward locations of 5/1 GR and 4 PARA.

(b) Mutual link up between 4 PARA, 5/1 GR and 6 GUARDS.

(c) Provide relief in terms of food supplies and treatment of the sick refugees who had taken shelter in the Twin Temples.

The axis of maintenance was to be cleared by the combat group ex 6 GUARDS. The combat group had to fight its way out and cleared it at about 1400h. A lesson that has emerged is that an attack from a direction other than frontal pays very good dividends. 6 GUARDS was trying to bash its way from the North to the South and in the bargain suffered casualties. Attack by the combat group from the different directions i.e., from the West with pressure from the North resulted in quick success. It also became very clear that if commanders are well forward then they with additional resources can influence the battle towards success.

Having opened the axis of maintenance it was planned to send forward supplies for the refugees. The committee comprising certain officials of the Sri Lankan Government and the Red Cross Society was constituted under CO 5/1 GR and as a result of discussion they were allowed to send a vehicle to the area of Star to pick up the rations and medicines. Besides this, 1444 sick/wounded were treated by doctors and RMO of 5/1 GR.

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5/1 GR was also able to recover two soldiers of 4 MAHAR who were earlier captured by the LTTE.

The main problem that was confronted was the handling of the refugees who had taken shelter in places like churches and temples. While relief could be provided to these various groups, it appeared extremely difficult to segregate the militant elements. It was felt that if a proper refugee evacuation had been organised before the commencement of the operations, troops involved in combat operations would not have been burdened with this unforeseen task of great magnitude which had to be performed on humanitarian grounds.

Another aspect which got highlighted was the presence of the Rover Gypsy and the commander. The commander has no choice but to be forward with the fighting troops so that he is readily available to take decisions and see for himself the progress of operations. There is also a requirement for the commander to be back, i.e., return to headquarters once in 24 hours. That would be taking a great risk going up and down. Therefore, I decided to lay a line upto the forward location so that I could perform the functions which could otherwise have been performed while being at the Brigade HQ.

26/27 October 87

These two days were mostly utilised for consolidating the position, carrying out link up with neighbouring formations, conducting searches to locate arms/ammunition caches and sending forward of supplies for the refugees as well as their medical treatment. I went around all the locations and saw the conditions of the refugees which was most pathetic. I also met some of the prominent officials including the municipal commissioner. The most pressing problem was to segregate the militants from the innocent people and either evacuate the innocent people to refugee camps in areas outside Jaffna or allow them to return to

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their homes. Despite personal requests on several occasions, no action had been taken in this matter. The government officials also requested that it would be befitting for India to declare unconditional unilateral ceasefire to enable the LTTE leadership to resume dialogue and grant general amnesty to its cadres. 5/1 GR was successful in obtaining information of some ammunition cache and recover larger quantities of ammunition.

29 October 87

The Deputy GOC gave his warning order for the Bde HQ with 6 GUARDS and 4 PARA to move to Palali for another task. 16 GARH RIF ex 18 Inf Bde was to relieve 4 PARA and 6 GUARDS. The Rover Gypsy left Road Junction around 0900h and arrived in the Bde HQ at 1000h. In the afternoon the debate was still going on whether 16 GARH RIF would relieve both the units by last light or not. I asked for a helicopter reconnaisance and carried out liaison with the Division Headquarter where I was tasked to develop operations towards Point Pedro saying that 16 GARH RIF could not relieve 4 PARA and 6 GUARDS by last light, I advised the Div HQ that 4 PARA could be relieved by 6 GUARDS who had earlier been tasked to do so anticipating such a situation. 4 PARA was, therefore, relieved by 6 GUARDS and the battalion concentrated by 2100h at South Kopai The battalion was to move to Palali the same night and 16 GARH RIF was expected to join the next day. 5 RAJ RIF was to be made available ex Palali. However, in the evening it transpired that 16 GARH RIF was to go to Elephant Pass and, therefore, not available for the operations. 4 PARA was, therefore, tasked to move alongwith the Bde HQ and concentrate the next day, i.e., 30 October 87.

30 October 87

At 0800h, I rang up the Deputy GOC and told him that if no additional battalions were made available, then it

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would not be advisable to move the HQ with one battalion and get concentrated at Palali. The brigade headquarters should move only when at least two battalions are available. This was however, over-ruled and I was ordered to move the brigade headquarters alongwith 4 PARA to area Palali. Helicopter lift was made available to me for reconnaisance along with 4 PARA CO and their officers. Helicopter lift did not materialise till 1100h. I, therefore, ordered the move of 4 PARA and Bde HQ by road and myself alongwith Rover Gypsy moved to North Kopai. I waited for the helicopter at North Kopai from 1215h to 1600h. The MI-8 which had landed with stores at North Kopai was utilised to come to Palali. The Bde HQ and 4 PARA reached safely and were deployed south of the airfield for the night 30/31 October 87.

31 October 87

While all the planning had been done for developing operations towards 188 Point Pedro and both the commanders i.e commanding officers 4 PARA and 4 RAJ RIF had been briefed, reconnaisance by commanding officers and company commanders arranged, I was called to the division headquarters for the change in task. I reached the division headquarters at 0930h where I was told that 4 PARA was to clear area Achhuvelli at the earliest. Since it was only a battalion task I requested the division headquarters that it was not necessary to impose brigade headquarters for this task. However, division headquarters insisted that I should get fully involved in the operations of 4 PARA. I alongwith the commanding officer and company commanders of 4 PARA carried out air reconnaisance of the area of operations, landed in the area Island already occupied by commando team of 1 PARA and finalised the plan by 1300h. The final plan was presented to the Deputy General Officer Commanding and GOC who approved it. 4 PARA carried out its preparation in the

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afternoon, cooordinated the command and fire support and started its operations at 1800h.

1 November 87

4 PARA successfully carried out its operations and secured area Achhuveli, Road Junction, Island and Y Junction. They also linked up with 9 PARA Commando team located at Bridge. 4 PARA was able to get hold of some sympathisers who gave valuable information and captured some hard core militants. I visited the unit and discussed the future operational plans with CO 4 PARA. The plan for clearance of Velilai which otherwise was to be launched on night 01/02 November, was postponed to night 02/03 November because 4 PARA had already been engaged in active operations for 48 hours. It would not have been advisable to push them through another operations. This was agreed to by the GOC.

The HQ was visited by Maj Gen ASC, HQ Southern Command and commanding officer ASC Battalion of 54 Infantry Division at 1500h. Later in the evening a larger contingent of senior army officers, including Brig RIS Kahlon, Brig SK Gupta and a team of civilian officials from the government of India visited the HQ at 1600h.

2 November 87

4 PARA was tasked to clear the area of Valalai (Twin Bridges) and hold it thereafter. All planning was done for this task and details were coordinated. I flew to the location of 4 PARA and the Deputy GOC and Colonel GS also accompanied me. I had finalised all details with the Commanding Officer and given my final orders towards this. I found that the area of bridges which was reported to be held by the militants was in fact under the control of the Sri Lankan Army. A little observation by us that a vehicle had passed over the bridge raised this doubt. Thereafter

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confirmation with regard to this started and it was discovered that the objective which we were going to capture during the night was actually held by the Sri Lankan Army. Therefore, a crisis was averted and a confrontation between the IPKF and SLA was avoided. 4 PARA was, therefore, re-tasked to link up with the SLA post by 1800h. This was done by 1705h. It has been a very important lesson that adequate information must be provided or obtained prior to launching an operation.

3 November 87

I alongwith the MG ASC visited 4 PARA. We flew to the Sri Lankan post at Twin Bridges and I saw the future location of the brigade headquarters. Having considered it, we moved to 4 PARA location and spent about three hours with the battalion. The company of 4 PARA ex Twin Bridges less a platoon moved to the DMA and cleared the road upto that place. On its way back, the company escorted the brigade headquarters and it was established in the new location by 1400h. I rang up Col GS and Deputy GOC in the evening to ascertain future plans. There appeared to be a total void and no thought appeared to have been given as to what the IPKF was to do after the fall of Jaffna. The troops were totally committed in the town of Jaffna and there were no troops available to progress the operations towards Point Pedro. I had to, therefore, await relief of some troops and make them available for launching operations. This would give more time to the militants to organise and may, therefore, pose some problem while launching operations towards VVT and Point Pedro.

4 November 87

The Deputy GOC 54 Infantry Division visited the headquarters at 1230h and discussed the plans for the development of operations towards Point Pedro. He said

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that 5/1 GR was to be made available in two lots i.e two companys on 6 November and the rest of the battalion was to come on 7th November. This meant that the operations could be launched earliest on the night of 08/09 November. I suggested that some troops could be allotted at the earliest so that VVT if found unoccupied could be occupied by relieving 4 PARA ex-Achhuveli but there seems to be no possibility of getting any additional troops thereby giving more time to the militants to re-organise and re-deploy/disperse.

4 PARA was asked to move a company and deploy in the area of cross roads. This was completed by 1530 hours.

5 November 87

The brigade was given the task of carrying out intensive patrolling in the area already secured and by midday three companys were deployed in house to house search operations. At about 1000h, I was tasked to capture VVT. This was planned as a task for a battalion, i.e., 5/1 GR to be launched on night 08/09 November. However, I decided on taking some very calculated risks and ordered 4 PARA to capture VVT by first light 06 November 87. The Commanding Officer was very reluctant as he was already stretched a lot. However, I was able to persuade him and convince him to re-adjust his deployment and get two more companys for this task. This having being done, the battalion was launched at 0200h on night 05/06 + November. In order to retain balance, ensure security of the axis of maintenance as also have reaction capability, I bid for additional troops so that 4 PARA could be relieved from its commitment in Achhuveli and concentrated North of the lagoon. This was agreed to and efforts were made to send one company ex 5 RAJ RIF on 06 November 87.

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6 November 87

VVT, the prestigious and prominent town which is the birth-place of Prabhakaran, the LTTE leader was captured by 4 PARA by 0600h. The GOC 54 Inf Div visited 4 PARA and met the Commanding Officer and officers at the SLA post. He was appreciative about the operations and also the 5 OR of 8 MAHAR who were recovered. They were alleged to be missing since 13 October 87. The GOC appreciated the action of 4 PARA and agreed to send a team of press and TV for its coverage. He also agreed to provide additional troops to relieve 4 PARA from Achhuveli. Thereafter, he flew me over to the battalion where 1 MLI were conducting some operations. He mentioned that I may be tasked to take over the clearance of the western part of the peninsula as well. Alternatively, I might be given 12 GRENADIERS to progress operations towards Point Pedro. I told him that the brigade had already moved a number of times with different grouping and it would be appreciated if the brigade was given additional troops, preferably its own battalions to progress operations towards the East and not moved once again from this position before consolidation. He said that he would project this and recommend that the brigade should conduct operations to the East with 12 GRENADIERS being placed under command.

At about 2000h, I got a call from the Deputy GOC giving the task for the capture of Point Pedro by 12 GRENADIERS. The Deputy General Officer Command gave out the total plan for the capture leaving no latitude for the Commander and the Commanding Officer to execute the mission. I tried to suggest certain modifications but it appeared that the plan had been concieved at the highest level and there was no scope for any modification. The plan envisaged establishment of two blocks by coy ex 12 GRENADIERS to be heli lifted from Navatkuli and a team

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of 9 PARA Commandos to be heli lifted from Palali and to be in position by 0900h 07 November The remaining battalion (bn) was to be moved from KKS by sea and launched from the East. Later on the plan to move the battalion by sea was cancelled and the battalion was to be heli lifted to Karavadi East. The concentration was completed by 1800h November 08. I decided to modify the plan on my own so as to achieve surprise and also ensure that 12 GRENADIERS in full was launched into operations.

The plan to capture Point Pedro had become very controversial. While the division headquarters was insisting that I execute the plan in the manner directed by higher headquarters, I had my own reservations for several reasons. Firstly, 12 GRENADIERS was not trained to carry out a beach landing. Secondly, the troops hailed from Rajasthan and were not used to the sea. If carried across the sea they would become sick. Thirdly, the task was pretty simple and did not require such a complex/ complicated plan of execution. There was a lot of debate on this issue. I, therefore, requested the officiating GOC to take the battalion directly under division headquarters and be responsible for its success or failure. This impasse impelled Maj Gen Harkirat Singh, GOC 54 Inf Div came over to my headquarters to personally discuss the plan. He knew me since 1967 when he was Brigade Major 7 Mtn Brigade and I was Adjutant 7 GRENADIERS. Having heard my viewpoint, he consented to my request to capture Point Pedro in 36 hours in the manner I wanted. That is how I made my plan with CO 12 GRENADIERS and we put it into effect. Point Pedro was captured within 12 hours. (24 hours in advance). Success of this operation came as a surprise to everybody and no one believed it. The army commander, therefore, decided to personally land at Point Pedro to see for himself. I took him in an open jeep and drove him around the area. He was all praise for us.

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(**Comments**—There are occasions in war when the higher commanders try to force their plan. The commanders in the field must execute a plan in the manner they have planned. The higher commanders must task a formation/unit and give the necessary resources. The field commanders must be given full freedom of action with inherent accountability).

7 November 87

The day started with very heavy rain which continued till almost 1300h. We were, however, fortunate that the company of 12 GRENADIERs and the para commando team were heli lifted during the brief period of about one hour prior to the onset of the rainfall. I had to wait for the helicopter to transport me to Kravadi East so that I could marry up with the battalion and brief the Commanding Officer personally. Having waited for long, I moved the Rover Gypsy by road to Karvadi East. I got the helicopter lift at about 1430h and married up with the battalion. The heli lift of the remaining battalion also commenced in the afternoon and was completed by 1700h. I utilised this opportunity of taking the Commanding Officer and the Company Commanders for helicopter reconnaisance and discuss the execution of the task in detail. The GOC also visited us in Karavadi East and he was assured that everything had been coordinated. After return from reconnaisance the plan was finalised. I decided to move one company less a platoon of 8 MAHAR ex Tropo and launch them in Nalyadi so as to divert the attention of the militants with regard to the major thrust. One platoon of this company was to relieve company of 12 GRENADIERS from the road block and the whole battalion was available to execute the task. This facilitated the move of 12 GRENADIERS and they achieved a total surprise till they reached within about one kilometer of their objective. Unexpectedly, and to our surprise, the Company

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Commander ex 8 MAHAR entered in the heart of Nalyadi and did not encounter any opposition. I exploited this opportunity and ordered re-inforcement of this platoon by one company ex 4 PARA by first light 08 November 87. The company ex 4 PARA moved with speed and was able to link up at Nalyadi and consolidated their position by 1000 hours with one OR wounded. Another column ex 4 PARA linked up with his coy along the main road and returned thereafter. I withdrew the coy less platoon of 8 MAHAR as they were to be heli lifted to join their parent unit. 8 MAHAR coy moved by helicopters at 1500 hours.

8 November 87

12 GRENADIERS had entered Point Pedro by first light and thereafter flushed out the rest of the area by 1300 hours 08 November 87. It was rather unfortunate that the para commando team despite clear instructions personally given to the OC team, Maj Bretto not to withdraw from the block position did so. On enquiring I was told that the Coy Commander spoke to his CO who ordered their move from there. It was a major mistake committed resulting in the escape of a large number of people including militants from Point Pedro. It must be ensured that troops placed under command of a formation/unit receive all orders through that formation/unit only. I wanted to go and visit Point Pedro and link up with 12 GRENADIERS, but for some reason the helicopter lift did not materialise and the whole day was wasted in waiting.

9 November 87

The army commander alongwith GOC, BGS and MA to army commander visited Point Pedro at 0930h. A press and TV team had also reached this place and they gave media coverage to the operations of Point Pedro. I briefed the army commander with regard to the operations of 115

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Infantry Brigade and he was very satisfied with the performance of the formation. After this he visited Point Pedro. I accompanied him to 4 PARA in VVT. The army commander spent some time in listening to the briefing of CO 4 PARA and talked to the troops. He complimented 4 PARA for their fine performance. The army commander was kind to leave two packets of sweets each as gifts to both the battalions and the brigade headquarters. He had also brought three packages for distribution amongst the officials at Point Pedro. After his depature I visited VVT and saw the house of Mr Prabhakaran. I returned to Karavadi East at about 1430h and the Brigade Headquarters joined the Rover Group at 1730 hours. 12 GRENADIERS based on certain information about the militants carried out cordon and search operations.

10 November 87

Today was the day for consolidation, readjustment and redeployment. We had found three foreign nationals i.e two French and one British operating in area Puloli West, of which there were two doctors, a French and a British. The journalist was also French. The doctors represented the European sponsored medical organisation which is generally operating with the insurgent elements throughout the world. Dr Philip of this organisation was found operating with the mujahideen in Afghanistan. It, therefore, appears that this organisation has an aim plus of reporting events as first hand knowledge by being in contact with the insurgents. Other cordon and search operations carried out yeilded no results as the militants had already moved out on night 08/09 November immediately after our offensive in Point Pedro. The only redeeming factor was the news that the local LTTE leader Mr Shoshai was killed on night 07/08November when he accidently ran into the column of 12 GRENADIERS approaching Point Pedro from the East. Thereafter, extensive cordon and search operations based on the information

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through locally cultivated sources were carried out with a hope to recover some weapons/ammunition.

11 November 87

The GOC 54 Infantry Division visited the headquarters at 1130 hours. He wanted some operations to be carried out in the area Puttur in conjunction with 4 MAHAR operations from the south. This was agreed to with a condition that either the company will come back on completion of the task or else it would be relieved latest by 1800 hours on 12 November 87. The GOC had given his concurrence and said that 5 RAJ RIF would be coming and relieving this coy by that time. However, it transpired during the conversation with the GSO-1 (OPS) that 5 RAJ RIF would be made available only on 13 November 87. Therefore the company had to be mentally prepared to stay till first light 13 November 87.

I visited 12 GRENADIERS location and met the officials of the base hospital as also the important civil officials. They all wanted relaxation with regard to the curfew, running of post office, bank, school and hospital. While I agreed to relax the curfew and also allow the hospital to be run on the laid down precondition that if the locals did not help in handing over the Tigers and if they sympathised with them and if our columns were fired upon and vehicles blown off then we would have no choice but to reimpose total curfew, cut off all the relief supplies including medicines to those areas from where the fire came. The local officials expressed their desire for a ceasefire, but it was explained to them that no ceasefire offer was acceptable without the surrender of arms as a precondition. They had an apprehension that the IPKF might leave them at the mercy of the Sri Lankan Army after the ceasefire and, therefore, there would be no one to save them from the SLA except the LTTE. They were assured that the IPKF would stay till

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their problems were resolved and they would not be left in a fluid situation. They also raised a point with regard to surrender of arms being insisted only in respect of LTTE. This misinformation was corrected and they were told that the surrender of arms was applicable to all the militant groups and without any exception.

It was becoming quite apparent that the IPKF was slowly and surely/moving into a situation of insurgency and a stalemate. The militants probably took a decision to merge with the local population and hide their weapons thereby achieving their aim of not handing over any arms. It, therefore, could be foreseen that the IPKF would continue to be involved in a deadlock. It was also becoming clearer that the troops were being kept on the move by going out at all times on information received from locals thereby making them tired. Therefore, there appeared to be no solution to the problem except to resolve the issue by political means.

POSTSCRIPT

Having fought the LTTE for over two years, I cannot but fail to appreciate the high level of motivation, dedication and expertise in unconventional warfare of this force.

I was also of the opinion and still strongly believe that there cannot be a solution to the Tamils problem in Sri Lanka without a settlement with the LTTE.

However, while the LTTE has been successful in focusing the attention of not only the Sri Lankan government, but also the rest of the world on the problems of the Tamil community in Sri Lanka, but it does not seem to be having the correct political acumen and vision to ameliorate their conditions except through the realisation of their only goal of 'Tamil Eelam.

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Appendix C

Refers to Chapter 10

SURVEY ON ASPECTS AFFECTING MORALE AND MOTIVATION OF SOLDIERS

Question and Answers	Officers		JCO's	NCO's	RFN/Sep/ Equivalent	Grand Total
	(+) 15 Yrs	(-) 4 Yrs				
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
Question–1 What do you feel when you are doing patrolling, ambushing, raids; and defending your post against hostiles or enemy for such long periods and repeatedly?						
(a) Get irritable.	26	10	52	64	87	239
(b) Get angry.	–	–	12	67	89	168
Question–2 What do you feel when you are so far away from your family, friends, relatives and familiar surroundings for so many years, living in a remote, isolated post?						
(a) Rejected; low morale.	12	08	46	60	97	223
(b) Sleepless; unable to work properly	13	13	13	60	79	178
Question–3 What are you afraid of most?						
(a) Harm to your family	10	07	45	50	80	192
(b) Defeat	08	10	55	70	87	230

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
Question–4 How does death or injury to your pl or coy Cdr hurt you?	09	04	07	45	90	155
Question–5 Why do soldiers commit suicide on the post or in the unit?						
(a) Because they do not get proper leave and letters from home.	13	06	40	70	99	228
(b) Because their family life is unhappy.	–	05	20	55	95	175
Question–6 Why do you think soldiers become ill-disciplined?						
(a) Because they are not looked after well.	08	10	35	100	110	263
(b) Because they are kept on remote and dangerous posts for prolonged periods.	04	–	19	40	85	148
Question–7 Why do soldiers become violent and hit, injure or murder their colleagues or seniors?						
(a) Because they are fed up of tough life forced by circumstances.	–	–	25	60	97	182
(b) Because their colleagues and seniors do not solve their difficulties.	20	12	49	77	107	265
Question–8 Why do soldiers get very angry and violent?						
(a) Because their *sathi* has been killed.	15	10	49	67	76	217
(b) Because their unit is dishonoured.	08	05	51	80	107	251

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(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
***Question*–9** Who brings comfort and solace to you and gives a helping hand when you are in difficulty and danger, or when you are very worried?						
(a) Your Cdr CO	15	51	80	117	273	
(b) God and prayer.	10	06	23	60	80	179
***Question*–10** Why do you get afraid?						
(a) Because you are tired, hungry, sleepy.	–	–	16	67	85	175
(b) Because your cdr has not explained or briefed you properly.	27	14	86	74	97	298
***Question*–11** What makes you face extreme danger resolutely and repeatedly?						
(a) The feeling that your *sathis*, section and platoon-walas are with you and equally in danger.	07	–	18	50	73	148
(b) Because of patriotism.	–	–	–	61	80	141
***Question*–12** What makes you brave and inspires you to sacrifice?						
(a) Your *sathis* and other members of sec, pl pl and coy.	–	–	10	42	70	122
(b) Your sense of duty.	13	13	44	60	72	202
***Question*–13** What do you fear most?						
(a) Death.	–	04	06	52	69	131
(b) Loss of *izzat* and defeat at the hands of the enemy.	16	10	55	90	104	275

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(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
Question–14 What will make you fight better?						
(a) Hard training and tough life of a soldier.	16	11	32	70	89	218
(b) Good and brave *sathis*.	12	10	72	82	107	283
Question–15 What will help you overcome fear?						
(a) Tough training and tough commanders.	14	10	50	65	89	228
(b) Sense of duty, discipline and sacrifice.	18	11	30	62	97	218
Question–16 When you are on a far away post for prolonged periods in the midst of dangerous and hard conditions what will help you remain cheerful, calm and motivated?						
(a) Relying on your leader/commander to help you remain cheerful.	11	07	29	50	71	168
(b) Patriotism, *izzat* of the *paltan*.	04	–	33	81	96	214
Question–17 What raises your morale when you are in danger or when you are serving in difficult areas for very long period?						
(a) Your *sathis*, sec, platoon and coywalas.	–	–	26	36	70	132
(b Good training, good discipline and good weapons.	18	15	55	79	101	268
Question–18 What will you do when you are gripped with fear because of sudden enemy action or other disasters?						

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(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
(a) Wait for the leader or commander to tell you.	05	–	14	56	80	155
(b) Get out, watch out, assess the situation and tackle it yourself without waiting for orders or for others to join you.	18	15	86	79	103	301
***Question*–19** Whom do you value most?						
(a) Good leader and commander.	14	18	15	60	82	189
(b) The nation and the people.	02	05	80	87	107	281
***Question*–20** What motivates you best?						
(a) Leaders and commanders.	05	–	13	50	85	153
(b) Reputation, deeds and achievements of the *paltan* and regiment.	18	20	96	81	97	312

Note: The benefit of this survey will only be when the above aspects are fully analysed and conclusions drawn.

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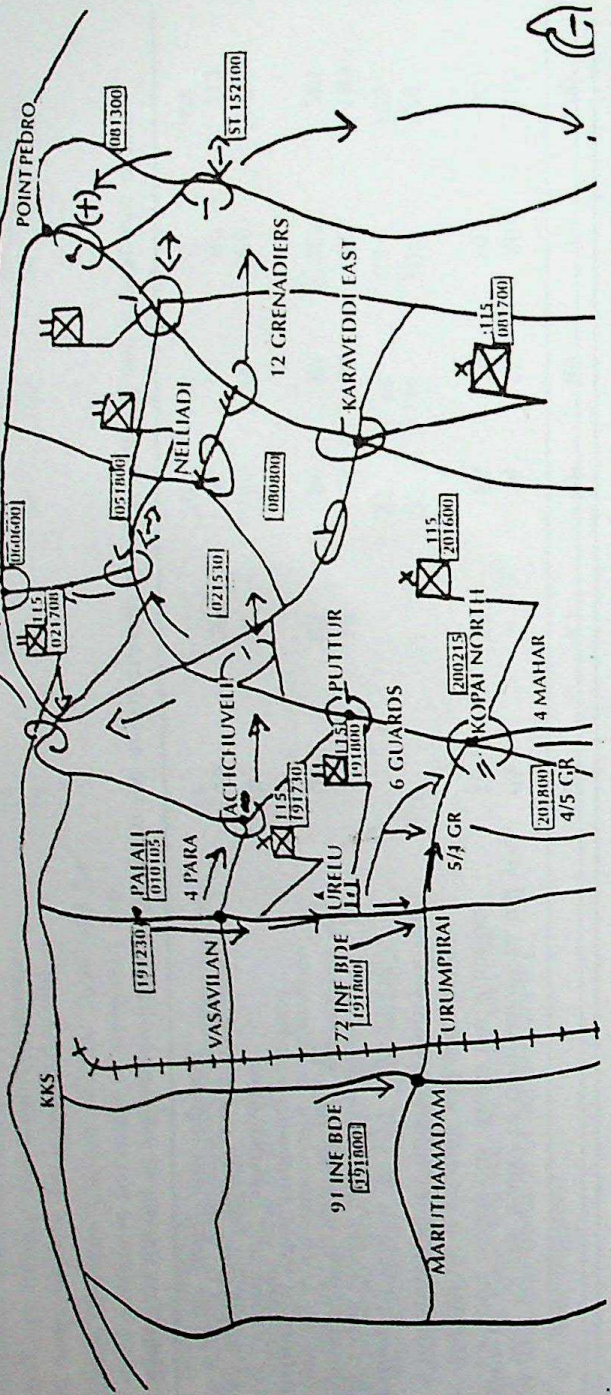
APPENDIX 'P'



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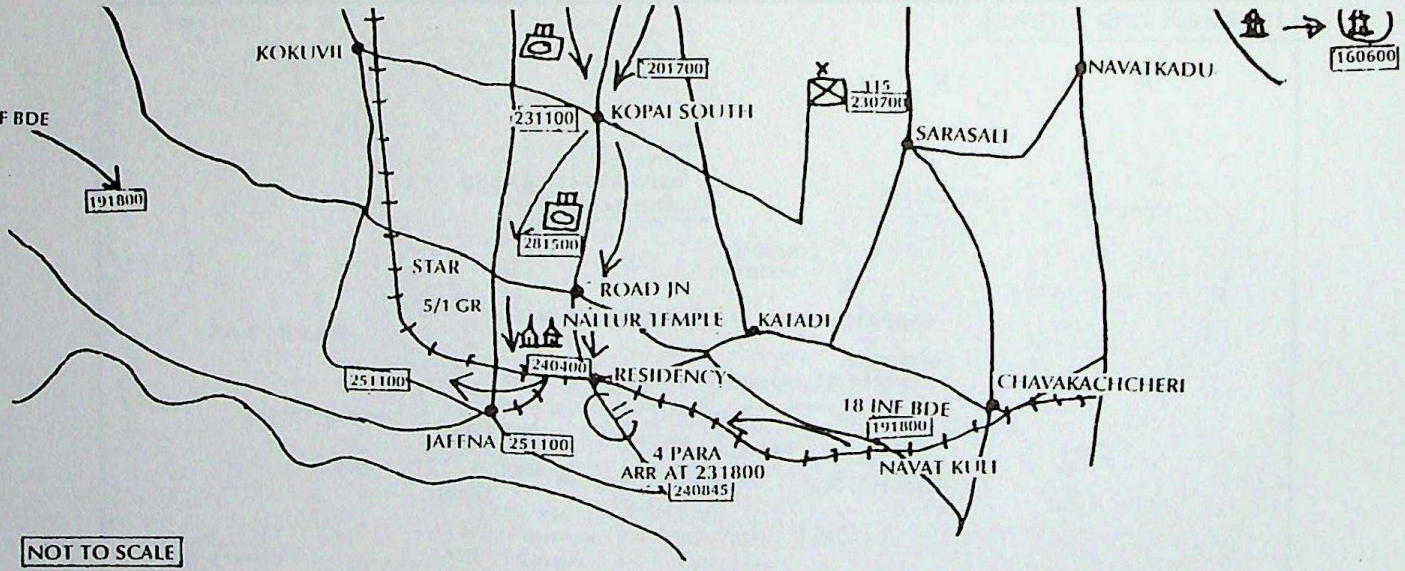

OP. PAWAN

Area of Operations in Sri Lanka - 115 Infantry Brigade

18 October - 30 November 1987

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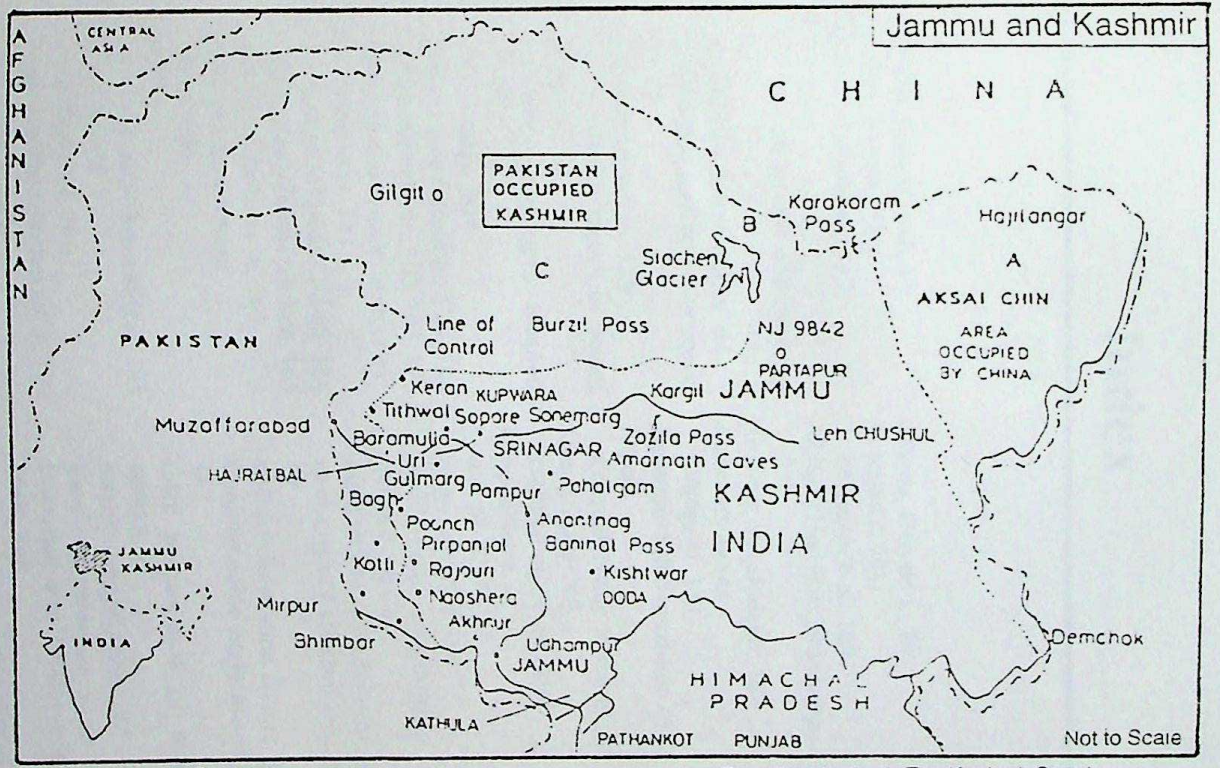
APPENDIX 'Q'



A. Under Chinese Occupation
B. Area handed over to China by Pakistan
C. Pak and Northern Areas under Pakistan

(Based on the book 'The Kashmir Saga' by Lt. Gen (Retd.) D.D. Saklani, PVSM, AVSM)

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Maj. Gen. Samay Ram was born on 02 August 1939. He had his early education at the King George's School, Belgaum.

He was commissioned into the Grenadiers on 17 December 1961. He held several key command, staff and instructional appointments. He was instructor at the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington and later posted as the Indian Military Attache at the Embassy of India, Kabul (Afghanistan) during the momentous period of the Soviet Intervention from May 1982 to March 1986.

He successfully led an Infantry Brigade during "OP. Pawan" (Sri Lanka) and was subsequently appointed as BGS (Ops) at Headquarters Northern Command, Udhampur (J&K). He commanded an Infantry Division in the Western Sector. He held the appointment of Additional Director–General (Operational Logistics) at Army Headquarters prior to his retirement on 31 August 1995.

He is highly decorated and one of the most-experienced officer in counter insurgency operations with exposure in Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Punjab and J&K.

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New Delhi - 110 002 (INDIA)
Ph.: 3260783, 3265523, 7131660
Fax: 011 - 3272766
E-mail: manaspublications@vsnl.com

ISBN 81-7049-136-3 $ 35.00
9 788170 491361
servation Foundation,Chandigarh